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Political Science.

[For the Northern Light]

A TARIFF—CONTINUATION OF FORMER VIEWS.

BY WM. H. JANSEN.

IT is a favorite argument of the friends of protection, that restrictions upon imports sustain the price of labor in the country adopting them. I have heretofore entered pretty deeply into a refutation of this argument, but I intend in this article to submit some additional facts upon this point. The design of a high tariff is to exclude importation; the consequence is a check to exportation. Now it is a historical fact, that in those countries which export the least, the wages of labor are lowest. England and America are the two greatest commercial nations in the world, and in these wages are highest. The continental kingdoms export less, and wages are lower. China produces but little more than she consumes, and here wages are at the lowest point. This fact proves that the price of labor must depend upon the quantity of the exports. Now, if a tariff reduces the quantity of exports, (and the advocates of protection admit it,) it must depress the wages of labor.

Is not this a complete refutation of the doctrine of protection? But let me come nearer home, and by the side of this fact, which is true as to nations, set a similar one, which is true as to individuals, so that they can illustrate each other. Where a person, who excels in the ability to work at a particular thing, instead of confining his exertions to the production of that, attempts to be his own carpenter, blacksmith, shoemaker, and tinkers at every thing which his neighbor can produce at half the cost, he will invariably die a poor man. Just so it is with nations. Their inability to supply all their wants is as great as that of an individual. And if it is the best economy for a farmer to stick to his land, and buy what he cannot produce cheaper himself, so it is the best economy for a nation to attempt only what it can produce to advantage. That economy, which is best for an individual, is best for a nation.

There is another historical fact, which proves the absurdity of protection. The price of labor depends upon variety of pursuits. Goldsmith says, that the inventor of every new pleasure is a public benefactor. He is so. For he creates a new field for labor, and a new desire to gratify. Now, no nation has or can foster within itself a sufficient number of arts to sustain prices. Perhaps in England the directions of labor are more multifarious than in any other country. Yet her production is infinitely greater than her consumption, and without foreign markets, the wages of labor would be very low. It is stated by some of the English papers, that on account of a diminution of exports and the consequent fall of wages, the home consumption for the last year, has decreased more than 40,000,000 of pounds sterling. Now, as the world will produce particular articles only in particular places, and certain trades can be carried on to advantage only in certain countries, it must follow that the world will produce an infinitely greater variety of pursuits than a hundredth part of it. And as the wages of labor depend upon this variety, will a tariff, which limits it to but few productions comparatively, and reduces the market from the whole world to a few millions of acres of it, be a benefit to labor? This is the grand aim of a tariff. The history of every nation, which confines its production to its own consumption, shows us, that a depression of wages is the consequence. Our own observation teaches us, that the individual who sells nothing and buys nothing, never becomes rich, but invariably dies poor. Can a tariff, which aims to accomplish this, be a benefit to industry? Common sense and history cry out against it. But let us go a little further. The cause of so great a variety of pursuits in the world, is labor striving to sustain prices. Where too many are engaged in one pursuit, and prices decline in consequence, new branches of business are started. Labor is enterprising; its eye is ever open to its reward. It is always planning—always searching; and not a particle of matter which can be shaped to suit the taste, to please the touch, to delight the fancy, and add one ray of pleasure to the life of man, is left unwrought by its ingenious fingers. All the various employments that now exist are owing to this spirit and this necessity. But if, as the advocates of protection assert, a tariff will sustain and increase prices, they put a stop to new pursuits and new inventions. For no man will leave a business, in which he is making money, to enter upon another, unless he is sure of making more. Prices must be declining—competition must be cheap—and markets doubtful and dull, in order to drive labor into new channels. Now, as the price of labor depends upon variety of pursuits, this state of things must occur in order to extend that variety. As the world increases in population, diversity of employments must increase in proportion. Now, if a tariff cannot prevent the increase of population, it cannot prevent the necessity which forces into new pursuits. While on the contrary, by striving to overcome that necessity, not by allowing labor to enter into new channels, but by preventing it by taxing other branches of business, which do not at the same time feel it, the necessity is transferred to the business taxed, without benefiting that sought to be protected, and by the postponement of exertion, by the lulling of ingenuity, by not facing the difficulty in the right way, the evil which at first was small, and affected only one class, and which would soon have corrected itself, now presses heavily upon the whole community.

When the curse, that man should eat his bread in the sweat of his brow was pronounced, this necessity was the fulfilment. And man might as well attempt to overturn the throne of Omnipotence, as evade or lighten it by legislation. When trades endeavor to shield themselves from competition at home or abroad by arbitrary laws, they deepen the effects of this curse upon others; and in time the wrong will recoil with fearful force upon their own heads. The whole history of labor proves this. Where now can we point to the laborers who have been benefited by such laws? Where, in the course of time, can we look up and say that mankind have lightened the force of this curse in any other way than a ready and natural compliance with it, uninfluenced by others or governments.

Go to the public halls of Greece: see the gay citizens of Athens moving idly about the streets. The severe laws of Draco and Solon for a while checked the vices which sprung out of idleness; but the toil of the helots cherished them faster than the laws could subdue. Go to the walks, to the baths and the public buildings of Rome. See the villainy of the mob. The plunder of foreign cities and the sweaty labors of the "*coloni partiarii*," have at length nursed an aristocracy so base, so weak, so corrupt, that the "Eternal City" has become the den of fiends, assassins, gluttons and fools; and she falls like a coward at the first approach of an enemy. Now come to the revival of liberty and letters; come to Florence and Pisa; to the home of the Medicis. Commerce is now free: labor has no restrictions upon it. The whole order of government is changed. The "*coloni partiarii*" begin to walk erect; to feel that they are freemen. The gold of India glitters on their breasts. As they rise, the nobility fall. They are well paid, and the effects of their industry and their freedom from governmental exactions are still to be seen, though centuries have elapsed since their liberty was destroyed. Now, trace labor through the winding channels, into which the protective system begins to force it. See how different becomes the condition of the laboring classes. The feudal aristocracy sees in commerce its most dangerous enemy; and through restrictions upon it, has made it its tax-gatherer and the people its powerless subjects. Away with such doctrines; they are fit for none but slaves.

One of the correspondents of this paper has said that the system of protection cannot be justified on the principles of Christianity. He is right. Because one man cannot produce in a business as cheap as another can, is that a reason why he should deprive the other of his markets by arbitrary laws? The *lex talionis* is not known in the Scriptures: and even on that ground it cannot be justified. The injustice cannot succeed. I might pursue these ideas further, and show by particular instances, what wretchedness, what crime, what corruption of government, what unnatural distinctions in society, what unequal accumulation and distribution of wealth, and what danger to liberty and happiness have followed all attempts, by any kind of legislation whatsoever, to evade the necessity which springs from the first curse. For as legislation is demanded to protect from the labor of others, it must be an injury to those against whom it is directed; and injuries always rebound upon the heads of those by whom they are inflicted. But I will leave these suggestions to be followed up by my readers, and turn back again to the argument so often repeated by the advocates of protection, that the farmers would have a very small market for their grain, should protection be withdrawn from our manufactures.

I have heretofore asserted that this would not be the case, and rested my conclusions upon the ground, that foreign nations could not sell to us, for any length of time, more than they bought of us; and that, consequently, foreign competition could not affect our own mechanics in supplying our additional wants. The statistics of the United States, I am happy to see, bear me out in this conclusion, and put to flight the above argument of the advocates of protection. When a person cannot sell sufficient to purchase all he wants, he will manufacture himself to supply his additional necessities. Just so it is with nations. Any one who is familiar with the history of this country, must be aware that the family manufacture of goods was formerly very great. There was a loom in almost every house. What was the reason of this? The farmers could not sell sufficient to supply all their wants, and they became their own manufacturers. Now, if foreign nations could not prevent manufacturing in families, they certainly could not do it in the right kind of home manufactories; because foreign nations cannot sell to the individuals of a country, collectively, more in proportion than they can to those individuals separately. And as nations are governed by the same feelings and views as individuals, so manufactures would flourish as free from foreign competition in the nation, as the manufactures in families. But our manufacturers were not content with supplying those additional wants, which foreign nations could not supply, because they could not take our produce in exchange. They wanted to monopolize the market; they wanted to exclude foreign goods altogether. This is a natural feeling. We see men in every business, by every art, striving to drive away competition. Even the farmers themselves are not free from this feeling. But is it right? Our manufacturers should be contented with supplying those additional wants, which foreign countries cannot supply, on account of their

inability to take our products in exchange. And the more grain the manufacturers take from the farmers, the more wants the latter will have. Not fifty years after the settlement of the colonies, some kinds of manufactures were started; and in 1771, the export of manufactures was the one-ninth of all the exports. Thus, it appears, that at that day, manufactures must have been quite extensive. For, if we were able to export, we must have been able to supply the home market, as no goods will be exported while they are wanted at home. Now, if manufactures were then undertaken and did flourish, they could have kept pace with the increase of population. At that time we had no tariff on imports, while our productions were taxed abroad. The country was poor—capital scarce—the population small—labor high—the country new—and few of its resources developed. Most goods, also, were made by manual labor. The steam-engine, and the vast variety of machinery which has followed it, were uninvented. The price of grain then was as high as it is now. Thus, then, it is evident that manufactures were undertaken and flourished before we had a tariff, and that the farmers had the same home market for their grain that they have now, in proportion to the population. Now, could not manufactures have kept pace with the increase of population? Every year the population increased—the country became richer—materials cheaper—new resources were developed, and machinery to a great degree supplied the place of manual labor. I will venture to assert, that the farmer of 100 acres of land, now buys five times as much as the farmer of the same number of acres did in 1771. Our home consumption has increased wonderfully within the last few years. With these increasing advantages, why could not manufactures have kept pace with the increase of population without protection? They could; and this is all that would have been necessary to sustain the price of grain. But has a tariff protected our manufacturers? I think not; but has been a serious injury to them. Foreign goods since 1771, (even during the revolution,) have every year increased in quantity, and become cheaper in our ports. And if they have increased in quantity and become cheaper every year, the tariff could not have effected its object, and consequently we are not to attribute the existence of manufactures to a tariff.

The advocates of protection also assert, that goods have become cheaper in consequence of a tariff. If this argument is good for any thing, it proves conclusively that a tariff has had directly an opposite effect from that designed, and consequently has not benefited manufactures. Let us now consider the reason why our high tariffs have not excluded foreign goods; and this will show what injury they have been to our own manufactures, and what benefit to foreign nations.

The restrictions which they placed upon our foreign trade, forced other nations to overcome them by cheaper production. The necessity of which I have spoken before, was shown by the operation of a tariff upon foreigners. Accordingly, the ingenuity of mind was aroused—the spirit of Archimedes started up—and the mechanical powers were so exerted, that our tariffs were no protection against them. Never before had the mechanical genius of man accomplished so much; never had England, who felt the necessity of machinery more than any other nation, advanced so rapidly in wealth. She is now far before us in such inventions, and by the time we have the last improvement, another is started. This has been the effect of an attempt to protect American labor against foreign labor; or to evade the first curse by legislation. Had we not invoked the assistance of government, the necessity, which we threw upon England, would have forced us into this machinal superiority; we would have been able to compete with England. And shall any one attempt to say that it has been carried to its utmost limit? Let us, then, see our error. The only hand that can wield the lever that is to lift the world, is that of necessity. The protected hand of manual labor is too weak to accomplish it. The above views, also, explain why the friends of free trade were mistaken in their calculations in 1816 and '24, that foreign goods would be excluded; and that a tariff for revenue and one of protection were incompatible. The facts show, that however it may have been designed, the tariff was not one of protection. Where machinery cannot be brought to bear—where production is as cheap as ingenuity and necessity can make it, there a high tariff will exclude foreign goods, and defeat the object of revenue. This is strikingly illustrated in the history of the English coffee trade.

The duties upon it, the quantities consumed, and the revenue have been as follows:

	s.	d.	*Pounds consumed.*	*Revenue.*
Duty in 1732,	1	6,	.....	£10,000 00 00
" 1783,	same,		.....	2,969 10 10
Duty in 1784,	0	6,	.....	7,200 15 9
" 1807,	1	9,	1,176,164	161,245 11 4
" 1808,	0	7,	9,251,847	245,856 8 4
" 1819,	1	0,	7,993,041	407,544 4 3
" 1824,	0	6,	10,766,112	
And in 1831,	at same,		22,740,624	583,751 0 0

The above table clearly proves, that where machinery or skill cannot produce the article cheaper, a high tariff will exclude it, and defeat the object of revenue.

The glass manufacture in England furnishes another illustration of this kind. In 1794, the excise duty was £1 5*s*. 5*d*. upon plate and flint, and other kinds in proportion. The consumption under this duty was,

Flint and plate.	*Broad.*	*Crown.*	*Bottle.*
cwt.	*cwt.*	*cwt.*	*cwt.*
67,615	20,607	83,940	227,426

In 1813, the duties were £4 18*s*.

In 1816, the consumption had decreased as follows:

Flint and plate.	*Broad.*	*Crown.*	*Bottle.*
cwt.	*cwt.*	*cwt.*	*cwt.*
29,600	6,140	55,502	155,895

In 1825, duty reduced one-half, and the consumption was as follows in 1828:

Flint and plate.	*Broad.*	*Crown.*	*Bottle.*
cwt.	*cwt.*	*cwt.*	*cwt.*
68,134	6,956	90,603	224,864

Can there be a clearer proof of the injurious effects of high prices in preventing consumption, or restricting markets. Though the population of Great Britain had doubled, owing to a heavy excise, the quantity of glass ware consumed in England was not, in 1828, as great as it was in 1794. A high tariff upon foreign goods, by increasing the price, accomplishes the same end. While it drives away foreign competition, it contracts the market. The above views and facts force us to these conclusions. 1st. If a tariff does not exclude foreign goods, the reason is, that its operation upon other countries is to force them to cheaper production, by bringing to the aid of manual labor, machinery, science, economy and new discoveries. And this result, so far from being a benefit to the country protected, is an injury to its labor. 2nd. If, on the other hand, production is as cheap as it can be, foreign goods will be excluded, and then we will share the fate of those nations which confine their production to their own consumption, depressed prices and contracted markets.

In this connexion, I will notice an assertion I made in a former paper, that cheapness of production should be the grand aim of legislation. Cheapness of production and increase of population must go together. And we generally find it true, that as population has increased, the cost of production has diminished, and so it must continue. One reason of this is, that variety of pursuits, and consequently extensive markets, must depend upon cheapness of production in other branches. And here observe how beautifully this necessity, from which the tariff men wish to shield themselves by legislation, operates when left to itself. While it forces some into new employments, it forces those who remain in the business, who feel the necessity to endeavor to produce cheaper, by studying more attentively, by machinery and new inventions. Thus, while these improvements sustain wages in that branch, those who have entered into new pursuits, are enabled, by this cheapness, to succeed. Their expenses of living are less, smaller capital is required, and the cost of making experiments is diminished; and while they create a market for the business they have left, this additional cheapness of production enables the business in which it is effected, to buy more of the one newly created. Thus markets are extended, and the wages of labor are sustained. Now a tariff is directly hostile to this natural course of labor. It strives to fly from this necessity, to keep labor from entering into new pursuits, and attempting cheaper production, by arbitrary laws. If it cannot accomplish its purpose, (and it cannot,) it is of no use. But if it could, what would be the consequence? A check to population, dearness of production, and contracted markets. It might keep up the price of an article, but not the price of labor.

The above views are strikingly illustrated by the following extract from Sir Robert Peel's late speech in the house of commons:

"I find that the total amount of imports and exports in the year 1814, as compared with the total imports and exports in 1840, was in the ratio of 86 to 132; but I find the declared value of exports, bears merely the ratio of 45 to 51. But on the other hand, I find that the British shipping employed in 1814, was 1,990,000 tons, whilst in 1841, it was 3,292,000."

What would have become of one-half of the trades in the world, if this wonderful cheapness of production had not taken place? Imagine for one moment that the increased quantity of goods since 1814, bore the same price now that they did then, except the difference between 45 and 51; I need not depict the consequences to any one; they can readily be anticipated by all. Yet, if a tariff is to sustain the price of every thing, as its friends assert, such would be the case. And through the misery which the order of nature would thus bring upon us, we would find that the necessity, which we had attempted to evade by legislation, instead of coming to us in the form of the celestial being, who pronounced the curse out of which it springs, it would appear to us in the form of a fiend, to torment us for attempting to evade the first law of our fallen being.

I regret that I am compelled to bring these observations to so sudden a close; and I hope that my readers will enlarge and carry them out. I had intended, when I commenced this article, to have annexed tables of imports and exports of manufactures, to show the truth of my remarks; but as they are accessible to all, I will only refer my readers to them.

But I think there is no advocate of protection, who will deny that foreign goods have every year increased in quantity and cheapness in our ports, and consequently a tariff has not protected our manufactures. It will also appear from the tables of imports and exports, that the manufacturing, agricultural, tobacco, fishing and lumbering interests are in the same proportion to each other, that they were in 1771. And as the tobacco, lumbering and fishing branches of business could not possibly have been benefited by a tariff, it is strange if a tariff has benefited agriculture and manufactures, that they should have kept in this proportion. The only rational and just conclusion is, that as it was natural laws which brought them in this proportion to each other, natural laws have preserved that proportion; and that the only effect of a tariff, has been to make other nations produce cheaper.

It will be observed, too, that our woollen and glass manufactures could not be undertaken early, on account of the high price and scarcity of the raw materials. We had no fine wool in America until 1807–8, when the invasion of Spain by Napoleon, caused the exportation of the Spanish flocks. And in 1811, Mr. Gallatin declared there was no fine wool in America. Flint, for manufacturing glass, was not found until 1810. But it will be perceived, that every branch of business has been undertaken, whenever materials could be found.

I regret that I have not space to extract some facts from Lord John Sheffield's book on American commerce, issued in 1784. It will be perceived in it, that in boots and shoes, except women's, and hats, except wool, in cast iron, in axes and scythes, in anchors, in coarse paper, in cordage, where we could get Russian hemp, in thread and stockings, in ship-building, and many other branches, we could manufacture as cheap as we could purchase abroad. And if we could manufacture as cheap in these branches of business as foreign nations, we could certainly do it now by proper exertion and economy. And if these manufactures only kept pace with the increase of population, that would be all that would be necessary to sustain the price of grain.

And now what are our farmers to gain by a tariff? I have heretofore shown, that if trade was perfectly free, they could not sell greater quantities of grain abroad, or at higher prices. It matters very little then, as far as they are concerned, whether foreign nations adopt the system of free trade or not. But suppose they adopt the views of the advocates of protection, on the ground of retaliation, and increase duties so high as to prevent importation. They will then have the satisfaction of keeping their usual quantity of surplus grain in the country, to bring down the price of that which is consumed; to pay twenty-five or fifty per cent higher for their goods; to be at the mercy of the manufacturers; and to bring the wages of labor down to a level of that in those countries, which confine their production to their own consumption, to that of China. Are our farmers prepared for this? But suppose the tariff does not exclude foreign goods, then it is of no use, and cannot protect our manufacturers, besides being a burden, and enabling other nations to produce cheaper than ourselves. It is astonishing how the idea ever could have possessed our farmers, that a tariff would benefit them.

Exports from the 5th January, 1770, to 5th January, 1771:

Axes,	£304
Brick,	959
Chaises,	880
Riding chairs,	480
Wagons,	610
Spermeceti candles,	23,688
Tallow "	237
Wax "	16
Cider and beer,	535
Cordage,	75
Earthenware,	200

Household furniture,	974
Grindstones,	36
Bar iron,	36,960
Cast "	32
Pig "	30,088
Wrought iron,	167
Leather,	383
Copper ore,	853
Lead,	82
Rum,	21,836
Loaf sugar,	332
Soap,	2,051
Sawed stones,	929
Starch,	558
Shoes,	392
Deer skins dressed,	31,453
Turpentine, oil,	102
Turnery,	138
Worked timber,	95 990
Ship-building,	100,000
Grains and all kinds of provisions,	833,142
Rice,	341,007
Indigo,	131,552
Ship-stuff and naval stores,	64,958
Raw Hides,	26,285
Tobacco,	906,637
Lumber,	70,000
Fisheries,	394,514
Furs,	91,485
Cotton,	1,759

Note.—I see that a committee of the "home league" report, that American tonnage has not increased in proportion with that of other nations within late years. Without looking at their statements, I would observe, that before the revolution, notwithstanding the navigation act, which was somewhat modified after the revolution, we could build ships cheaper than any other nation, and navigate them at less cost, and yet pay a higher price for labor. Vide Sheffield on American commerce; vide, also, Burke's glowing description of American navigation. Why cannot we do so now? In 1769, there were nearly 400 sea-vessels built, most of them for foreign nations.

[For the Northern Light.]

REMARKS IN REPLY TO MR. JANSEN ON "A PROTECTIVE TARIFF," IN THE MARCH NUMBER OF THE NORTHERN LIGHT.

BY JAMES REES.

THE leading article in the last number of the Northern Light, being addressed to farmers principally, I have read it with considerable attention: but find so many assertions which are at variance with my observations, (somewhat limited it is true,) on this subject, that I have "failed to be convinced" of the propriety and truth of free-trade doctrines. I beg leave therefore to offer a few remarks, in a farmer's rough way on Mr. Jansen's positions.

Mr. Jansen remarks, that "no two countries have the same capacity to produce every agricultural product, or the same natural advantages for manufacturing." This remark may apply with considerable truth to the small states of Europe, but not to the United States, embracing as it does every variety of climate and soil, necessary to the production of every article for man's use. The New England and northern states produce in great abundance the finer and common grains, with timber, grass, &c., and are peculiarly adapted to raising neat cattle, horses, sheep, &c. Passing south to Maryland, which with the grasses, and grains of the north, yields also the tobacco, thence south through Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, thence west through Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, we have an immense territory which yields with the grains of the north, those great staples—rice, cotton, tobacco and sugar. West of the Alleghanies we have an almost boundless territory, more fertile, as remarked a French traveller,* than any other portion of the globe. This vast region is waiting for the axe and plough, and its soil will receive any grain, and return a rich recompense for the toil of the laborer. The northern part of the U. S. is rich in the coarser, and the south yields many of the finer minerals. The central portion, as Kentucky, and the southern parts of Ohio, Indiana, &c., may, with proper cultivation, and I doubt not soon will, produce the grape for wine in abundance. The whole country is eminently adapted to the culture of silk. I have no doubt that tea of excellent quality and in profitable abundance can be produced here, as we have the requisite climate and soil for its growth. An eminent agriculturist remarked to me a few days ago that he had ordered some tea seed, and expressed great confidence in being able to produce an excellent article. Coffee may be raised in Florida. Indeed all the necessaries and luxuries of life may be produced in this one country. Throughout the whole U. S. we have excellent manufacturing privileges. Almost every county is watered by streams adequate for the propelling of all kinds of machinery.

With this rapid view of our country it will be seen that we have all the essentials of a world within our land. Why then should we be dependant on "the outside of this world" for our necessaries and luxuries?

What Mr. Jansen next says of the design of the advocates of a tariff is, I think, incorrect. Their design is not to force into existence any branches of business for which we have no natural advantages, but to create and sustain, against the opposition of the established factories of older countries, those branches of business, for which we have all the natural advantages. Other countries have advantages over us, not in natural facilities, but in wealth, acquired skill, and above all, in the low rates of labor in those countries.

This being so, all that he says in support of this incorrect position, falls to the ground as worthless. But for argument's sake I will follow him. He says that by taking a portion of laborers from one branch of business, wages in that branch rise, but the price of its products do not rise. I will give one illustration *per contra*.

We will suppose a colony of farmers, say 2000 in number, emigrate to Oregon—select a tract of land possessing abundant facilities for farming, manufacturing, &c. They go to farming, and produce all the different grains, cattle, and all other agricultural produce. The consequence is being all farmers they have a great surplus: and not being manufacturers, they have to obtain from abroad all manufactured articles. The places from whence they receive these articles will not take the Oregon produce in exchange, for the very good reason that they have enough of their own. Now what is the effect on the Oregon colony? Why, naturally enough they are drained of their money, if they have any, and if not, they go in debt, which is just as bad. They see this, and finding no market for their surplus produce, and no way of getting their necessary manufactured articles without ruining themselves, and having abundant manufacturing privileges, they go to work, and make their own wares. To do this a large portion of people are taken from the field and placed in the workshop. The immediate effect of this is to raise the price of farm produce, for there is just the same number of mouths to feed, but not the same number of hands to produce this food, that there originally was. To sustain these articles, it is necessary to shut out the foreign articles; this they do by laying duties on those articles.

Now for the great result. The farmer finds a ready market at home, for his surplus farm produce at good prices, instead of suffering the loss of that produce, rotting in his barns and fields. The manufacturer makes all that is needed in the colony, and thus places that colony entirely independent of foreign supply. Thus the price of the farmer's produce will be increased, the manufacturer enabled to proceed in a profitable business, and the whole colony benefited. The naturally increased numbers and wants of the colony furnish constant and ready sales for the constantly increasing produce.

This illustration may not be as full as it might be, but I think it will be understood.

Now the United States are precisely in the position of this Oregon colony; we have all the natural advantages, but not the acquired skill and capital which other countries have obtained by protection, to compete with those countries. By proper protection, we can soon obtain that skill and capital.

Mr. Jansen then argues to the effect that we cannot import more than we export, or in other words, that we cannot buy more than we sell, and says—"if foreign work-houses take the product of our labor in exchange, to that extent have we power to purchase of them." It would be a good thing for this country if it was so, but it is not. The foreign work-houses do not take our farm produce, for a reason which I find in Mr. Jansen's communication, where he speaks of England, which he says "produces almost grain enough for her own use," and before that, he says that "England sometimes raises more grain than is needed for home consumption." Take the continent of Europe and we will find that a surplus of farm produce is raised every year. Even if England did not produce enough for her own use, she would not come to the U. S. but would go to the continent for the wanted supply: one reason for this is, that she does and always has regarded us with too much jealousy to allow us to live by selling; but is very willing that we should die by buying.

But to return to what is said about buying and selling. The present situation of our country will not support this oft repeated assertion. For the ten years from 1831 to 1840 inclusive, we have imported upwards of 200,000,000 worth more than we exported, or in plainer farmer's talk, we bought that amount more than we sold. All this is unpaid for; our country is drained of the precious metals; our banks, once sound are greatly weakened, many of them have fallen; and we are still in debt head, body and all, and no means of paying that debt. Now I think that if we had a higher tariff for the past ten years, so as to keep out this literal life-blood sucker, we should not be in this turtle-on-his-back position that we are in; while we should have exported just as much, for other countries will not buy when they have enough of their own: and when they have not enough, they will buy just what is lacking and no more. Is not this so?—Ask any man who knows any thing about this matter, whether he is a free-trade or a tariff man; I care not which. What is the cause of the great pressure which prevails at the present time over the whole U. S.? and he will answer, that it is a great foreign debt caused by excessive importations. Now I would further ask that man, if a higher tariff than we had would not have prevented this? and ten to one that he would answer—Yes. Prevent the cause, and the effect is unknown.

The question is asked—Will a tariff prevent us from producing a surplus? I answer that it may not. But until we produce a sufficiency of all things necessary for use, we need not ask that question. My Oregon colony illustration will show that while the whole community is engaged in one business, a surplus produce of that business will collect; but as soon as a portion of that community go into other business, that surplus will diminish: and until that community produces all that is required for its own use, there need not be a surplus of any thing. And if after that time a surplus should collect, will it not be better than when they were all engaged in one business, producing a large surplus of one article, which they could do nothing with, and while they were forced to buy one half of the necessaries of life. If evils there must be, let us choose the least.

Here let me say what perhaps I should have said before, that, I do not think a nation's wealth, prosperity and strength is shown as much by the large amount which she exports, as by the small amount which she imports.

Mr. Jansen thinks that the greatest difficulty encountered by our farmers is the scarcity of laborers. This is altogether wrong. Under the present existing system of comparative free-trade, we are overrun with laborers applying for work, but we can't hire them; we have no market for our produce; we can't sell it at any price, and obtain cash for it; we want the laborer to work for us, but we can't get any thing to pay him with. Now here is neighbor Bowen has twenty as fine head of cattle as ever were seen; some of them fit for the butcher. He has been wanting to sell all through the winter; but he can't get what he wants the most—money. So it is with all other farm produce; it can't be sold for any thing like a reasonable price. And this is not caused by a surplus of production: but by the falling off in the demand: by the increasing poverty of those who were, under the operation of a judicious tariff, in a situation to buy and live comfortably. So much for the blessing of a tapering tariff, as the "compromise act" is called.

I have already written much more than I intended when I commenced, but have not completed the review of Mr. Jansen's remarks, nor have I replied as fully as I could have wished to the several points touched upon. I shall however be compelled to break off.

It seems to me that what is said in relation to the importation of iron is not sound; but I will leave it to some one who has better opportunities for judging than I have.

To the correspondent whose argument is corrected by Mr. Jansen, I will leave the reply to that correction. I had a few thoughts to present, but have no room, nor will the constant toil and labor of the farmer's life permit.

In conclusion, let me say that the American farmer needs protection, and demands it. He does not see a market abroad for his produce, and he asks for one at home. He has no interests separate from the great mass around him. The manufacturer's interests are his interests. The country's interests are his too. He is ever ready to bear the burdens of government: ever ready to stand foremost in defence of its rights and just powers, and he asks that if any advantages are to be derived from government, that he may receive a portion of them. He asks for protection to the American manufacturer. For in this is he protected; without this he is ruined.

Utica, March 31, 1842.

* Alexis de Tocqueville.

[For the Northern Light.]

CHARACTER OF OUR LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES, AND ITS INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC OPINION.

BY C. M. BROSNAN.

In all human institutions there will always exist some imperfections, inasmuch as human wisdom is incompetent to foresee every contingency, and therefore, unable to provide against every evil consequence that may result from its own plans and deliberations. The lapse of time and consequent change of circumstances, the different tastes, feelings, conditions and interests of succeeding classes of men, always tend to render the contrivances of a prior race inadequate to the necessities, and ill-adapted to advance the well-being of their successors. And this is true not only of new inventions of art, but also respecting schemes of governmental policy and the establishment of those institutions, upon which are founded the hopes and happiness of society. Reasoning from these premises as regards governments, we conclude that the introduction of the democratic system is accompanied with its ratio of evils and imperfections as well as other systems. Yet more, although in some respects it is attended with less, yet in others we sometimes find more to condemn than in governments that make fewer pretensions towards a nice regard for the welfare of the governed.

It is not, however, designed to inquire here, whether this is necessarily inherent in democracies; or whether there is any thing in our form of government itself, that favors the origin of that demoralizing licentiousness which at the present day erects its thousand heads everywhere around us; but that we are fearfully and ominously threatened with its blasting consequences admits of no question. There is a dangerours spirit prevailing among the different orders of men; and its encroachment upon the sanctity of public and private rights, every day grows more shameless and daring, until at length, as might be expected, our rulers and law-givers have bowed to its unhallowed supremacy. Some have imbibed the idea, that to be free, implies a *carte blanche* to overstep all the barriers of order, and that the proper exercise of that freedom, consists in a domineering, I had almost said savage, and insolent exhibition of our basest passions. This fact cannot, should not be blinked; but every citizen who loves order and the welfare of his country, should raise his denunciations against it, until it would wither beneath the rebuke of an indignant, insulted, public opinion. That a spirit of ultraism endangering the common weal exists in our country, cannot be denied, unless by those who willingly and determinedly close their eyes to truth. Its footprints are written in the insubordination that characterizes our disregard for those salutary restraints, which the decorum and claims of social order should impose upon the conduct and the character of men. Common observation, though pained in witnessing this evil prevalent, even among the less influential class of the community, looks with commingled feelings of shame and disgust at its appearance in the very halls of legislation; and the mind shudders at the fatal consequences, of which it may be productive. Our national councils represent scenes now a days, from the contemplation of which we shrink; grave legislators have become gladiators; and reason has been supplanted by the angry storms of passion and the conflict of degrading personalities. Nor indeed is it in the national councils alone, that this crying evil has secured to itself a foothold. State legislatures are fast catching the infection. And what, we ask, are the probable consequences? Is it supposable that other classes will not catch this disorganizing malady, which is so communicative of its contagion, by contact and example? Or do sunbeams always illumine the valleys, while the mountain-tops are enveloped in clouds? Let us not deceive ourselves: if self-respect, the common civilities of life and the honor of the country will not restrain these headlong representatives, it is time the people signify their disapprobation, and fix a seasonable limit to so disgraceful and dangerous a state of things. Experience shows us that each succeeding year adds virulence to this disease. Surely, if no danger were reasonably apprehended from the influence of such examples and proceedings, the laws introduced under such excited and exasperated feelings, and enacted under the impulse of vindictive passion and in indecent haste, are more likely to entail misery on those who must obey their injunctions, than they are to provide for their necessities or advance their interests. And as another consequence of such legislation, each succeeding session is wasted in ripping up the miserable and indecorous patchwork of the preceding one: thus constantly exposing our stability to the perils of incessant changes. We again say emphatically to those frenzied statesmen, pause in your destructive career; and to the people whose dearest interests are neglected, if not jeoparded, interpose your legitimate restraints!

Let us now examine how public opinion abroad is affected by the conduct of our Legislative assemblies. And here we confess with regret, that the progress of liberal principles among several of the European dynasties, and especially in England, has within the last few years been backward, if the expression be allowable. We speak advisedly on this subject. Men who have visited us from abroad, and whose political lives were distinguished for their advocacy of popular rights, have left us disgusted with the scenes exhibited in our legislative halls.

Lord Stanley was in early life imbued with principles so liberal, and so strenuously advocated the justice of equal representation, as to be numbered among that class of politicians in England, called Radicals; but he left us full of the conclusions he had drawn from the repulsive exterior we presented, and ever since he has not a parallel in toryism among the members of the British Parliament. And we may reasonably expect that, when distinguished individuals from abroad, who come to sojourn among us, and whose political history is one of liberality, shall have returned to their own governments, they will spread abroad the story of our dishonor. It is unnecessary to speculate on the consequences.

However much cause there is to deprecate and deplore the existence of this licentious spirit of which we are complaining, wherever and whenever it appear; yet while it was discarded from the precincts of our legislative halls, there remained to us a cynosure to whose undimmed lustre, we could point with a degree of redeeming hope and gratification. While the lovers of free institutions, and the advocates of order, expressed sorrow and alarm at the infatuation of their fellow citizens; and while anti-republicans witnessing our jars and intemperate quarrels, laughed in fiendish joy over our degradation, and gloated over the anticipation of our fast approaching dissolution, we could point to our state and national councils with a satisfactory assurance that calmed the misgivings of friends, and with a proud exulting confidence that triumphed over the cherished anticipations of enemies. But we have fallen upon worse times. In modern days this consolation has departed. The very drapery of our legislative halls is stained by the foul breath of vulgar personalities, indecent epithets and ignominious tumult and disorder. Nay, as we write, pseudo-democrats are dinning into the nation's ears the language and the theme of their own infamy and dishonor.*

We have been drawn into these reflections not because we feel any predilection for a different form of government: on the contrary. we hold representative governments the most consonant to reason, and the best calculated to dispense universal happiness among those who live under them; and it is our wish to see their blessings extended and perpetuated, that compels us to reprobate what seems to us deserving of condemnation. But if defects are discoverable in the plan of our government; or if any portions of its complicated machinery, appear to us, inaptly and injudiciously applied to the discharge of their respective functions; finally, if corroding cancers are seen sprouting over the body politic, it would be base infidelity in an eye-witness to observe a treacherous silence. We are only surprised that the public press of the country will not unite in denouncing the evils, which we have been feebly portraying. No matter what its politics, or party may be, if the press will do its duty to these who impart to it sustenance and support, its force and energy, should be put forth unitedly in denouncing these lawless and disorganizing ebullitions of passion and discord, until every spasm that denotes a lingering existence, shall have ceased under the withering rebuke of its thousand tongues. This we say is one of the first duties of the public press; and if it concentrate its strength, it will be felt, acknowledged and obeyed. But so long as it wastes its industry in searching after palliatives, to mantle over the vices and political sins of any class of men, it is faithless to its highest and most solemn obligations. We confidently trust to see public attention directed in a most serious manner to the disgraceful exhibitions continually acted over and over in our legislatures, until we cannot contemplate them without loathing and the moist pognant regret.

Albany, April, 1842.

*Note.—We are sure injustice will be done to our correspondent by supposing that he regards the evil, of which he complains, as resulting from the nature or influence of our free institutions. That our legislative halls have too often of late, been the theatre of personal broils of the most indecent character, cannot be denied; and we agree with our correspondent, that popular opinion should interpose the proper remedy. We believe that this unlicensed spirit arises from causes wholly unconnected with our political organization, and that no other form of government contains in a higher degree the facilities for promptly and efficiently correcting it.—[Editors.]

Agriculture.

[For the Northern Light.]

CAPTAIN BARCLAY'S AGRICULTURAL TOUR.

BY WM. H. SOTHAM.

I perused Captain Barclay's Agricultural Tour in the United States, with much satisfaction and pleasure. I think his opinions are substantially sound, and worthy of an extensive circulation amongst the farming community; but I must beg leave to differ with him in some instances.

In the first place, in speaking of our stock of Herefords, he gives me credit for importing the whole. Allow me to say that the public are much indebted to the Hon. Erastus Corning; for his purse and generous heart have rendered me much assistance in the affair. Without it, I could not have done anything, as the expense was enormous; and the people of this country would have still been in the dark relative to the best kinds of Hereford cattle and Cotswold sheep, which I think will ultimately be the prevailing stock for many parts of the country.

The captain says in page 22, "I accordingly saw a herd of about twenty Hereford cows, all tied up and in fair condition. The Herefords are very good, but I do not pretend to much knowledge of that breed." In the 25th page, he cautions the Kentucky farmers against purchasing the Herefords for carrying their beef to market, and advises them to import Angus or Aberdeenshire *doddies*, which he recommends for their activity. I contend that the Herefords are as active animals as the world can produce, will carry as much good quality of beef to market as any other kind, and when there, will sell as readily, and obtain more prizes, than any other breed; proof of which can be obtained by referring to the Smithfield show for half a century back. I have the utmost confidence in the captain's judgment, but I do not think any person can well attempt to build up a breed of cattle by his own assertions, when he acknowledges his ignorance of the quality of the breed he calls inferior. The captain well knows that the Herefords are at "the top of the tree," in England. There is a challenge open there for acceptance, against any other breed. In page 42, and the following pages, when speaking of Mr. Wadsworth's mode of farming, he says, "The rotation of crops followed on the arable farm, are wheat and clover alternately; that is, wheat is sown in autumn, and amongst it clover is sown in spring; the clover remains until the second summer, neither mowed nor pastured, but ploughed in again for manure, and wheat is again sown in autumn. This is the only manuring the land receives; for as the cattle are all foddered in winter on the meadow, the straw is either burnt, or piled up in large masses to rot and waste under the influence of the weather. That this is a most improvident mode of agriculture, will at once occur to every person acquainted with the principles of good farming; indeed, it must create infinite surprise that the advantages to be found in a right system of convertible husbandry, should, at this time of day, be as a *terra incognita* to the otherwise enterprising American cultivator; for it is proper to observe that in describing Colonel Wadsworth's practice, I relate what takes place generally over the states. Were Col. Wadsworth to alter his mode only so far as to provide the means of consuming his straw by foddering it in the yard in winter, and his clover by soiling with it in summer, his cattle might be brought to double their present value, at the time he sends them to market; and his land being manured with a due allowance of farm-yard dung thus obtained, might carry nearly double the crop of wheat it now produces, which, notwithstanding the great natural fertility of the soil, averages only twenty-five to thirty bushels per acre." I fully concur with the captain in this opinion, that the colonel's system is a very bad one, but would feed the clover off with sheep, instead of soiling cattle with it, as it would save carting out the manure, and a better quality of it would be dropped by the sheep without waste or labor, which, in my opinion, is a prominent item where laborers' wages are exceedingly heavy.

In page 44—"Mr. Wadsworth has a numerous tenantry, but under a tenure which can yield neither profit to the landlord, nor benefit to themselves. They have no leases, but plough and sow from year to year, the landlord receiving for rent a portion of the produce in kind. His portion is ascertained on the field after the crop is reaped, and is delivered by the tenants, at an appointed barn, where it is instantly thrashed out, and the straw given to the winds.

"Such a system must be a bar to every improvement. It in fact operates as a prohibition of all ex-

ertion and expenditure by the tenant, for increasing the fertility of his farm, it being unreasonable to expect that any tenant will use exertions or lay out capital, where the landlord is to reap certainly a large share of the benefit thence accruing, and from the precariousness of the tenure, perhaps the whole. Mr. Wadsworth, therefore, may go on to draw his share of the pittance of grain, which his tenants may, under present circumstances, be able or disposed to raise ; but he must lay his account that in these circumstances nothing can be done by them to improve the soil and render it duly productive.

"In agricultural business it is well known there are two extremes : at the one extreme is placed the reckless speculator, who catches at every new theory, however visionary ; at the other, he with whom a sufficient reason for avoiding every improvement, however much recommended by experience, is that it is an interference with old rules and habits. Now, although Mr. Wadsworth is an acute, well informed man, who must have seen well and far before him, having at an early period made an extensive purchase of land at a price greatly under the value to which time and circumstances have raised it, yet it appears to me he is much wedded to old customs; otherwise he would at once perceive the advantage of dividing his estate into farms of a proper size, erecting on them suitable buildings, and granting leases for such a term of years as would ensure to the tenants a return for money expended on improvements. By similar means, and by establishing and stipulating for judicious modes of culture, the value of land in Scotland has in my own time been trebled, and I have no doubt that by adopting them, the value of Mr. Wadsworth's property would be increased in the same ratio ; but I was unable, by this argument or any other, to persuade him to change his system of tenantry.

" Here and throughout the state, the agricultural horses are light and blood-like, and I greatly admire the excellent control which they and the agricultural oxen are under, regulating all their motions with great alacrity by the word of command ; but the horses appear too slender ; and a cross with the Suffolk, Clydesdale, or heavy Lincolns, would, in my opinion, make a great improvement."

In these remarks the captain and I decidedly agree ; many an old farmer's beaten path is trod too hard by its constant travel, and it is a difficult undertaking to entice him from it. Persuasive reason and sound judgment can have no influence where prejudice has gained possession. I was highly amused a few days since, when turning in stock to feed off a piece of rye. The neighboring farmers were all astonished, and it was with difficulty I could keep them from turning them out as they passed, although they saw they were quietly feeding, and the bars taken down between them and the adjoining pasture. Some called me a fool ; others, an extravagant waster of property, and laughed and sneered at the idea ; but let me tell them that those farmers who sow a crop of rye for harvesting five or six years in succession, (which is customary in this neighborhood,) will soon exhaust their soil and their purse. No crop will impoverish soil more, if allowed to grow to maturity ; and no crop will replenish it sooner, if fed off in the green state. Those who laugh at the system, will find that they are laughing at their own losses and ignorance.

I will refer my reader to the remarks I made in the Light in December last on the subject of horses.

Page 77.—" I could not, however, learn whether Indian corn is found to be an exhausting crop, as 'exhausting crop' seems not to be a term in an American farmer's vocabulary ; at least it has not yet been recognized in his language, although a persistence in his present management may ere long illustrate its meaning. From the class to which this plant belongs, it should be inferred that it is to be included among deteriorating crops."

It is my impression that this crop is not so beneficial to the farmer as generally thought to be, and that the Americans will have to look more closely to their " exhausting crops," or they will lose all life from their soil.

The captain very justly says that " the farmer is too sparing in his seed grain ; where they sow one bushel and a peck of wheat to the acre, they ought to sow four bushels." I differ with him in the quantity of wheat. Three bushels is considered enough on any soil in England, and I think it may be a suitable quantity for this climate. Four bushels of oats or barley are necessary.

" That there is much room for improvement in the practice of American agriculture, I have endeavored in some respects to point out ; and it is an important and encouraging consideration that the defects calling for remedy in a great measure proceed from the excellence of the soil and climate, which, operating so spontaneously in production, have as yet left in abeyance those exertions which, as is exemplified in other countries, a less fertile soil and a more ungenial climate would have drawn forth, it having been well expressed, by a celebrated agricultural writer, that ' where nature is bountiful, man is too apt to be indolent.'

"If I might presume to address, and could imagine my advice would reach the landed proprietors of the States, I would impress upon their attention the advantages to be derived from an observance of the modes of husbandry which, with the aids of science, and after long experience, have been established in Britain, both as regards the cultivation of land, and the breeding and rearing of stock.

" This is a matter of more concernment to the American farmers than any of them seem aware of; for, although from the great natural richness of their soil, and, in the general case, its recent subjection to culture, it may as yet exhibit but few signs of exhaustion, it cannot be supposed that under a system of overcropping, or as in Scotland it is emphatically termed, a ' scourging system,' it will not at length give way ; and when its impoverishment once takes place, they may be assured it will be a matter very difficult, or it may be impracticable, to restore it to any thing like original fertility.

"This observation more particularly applies to land which has been reclaimed from forest. Alluvial soil, by deeper and deeper ploughing, may be kept in a productive state for a longer time ; and when it sickens, as sicken it must, from constant working without feeding, it may perhaps be revived by stimulating manures, or by being laid to rest for a sufficient time under grass. Even in this case, prevention being better than cure, it were unwise to deteriorate the soil by overcropping, when the means of preserving its fertility are at hand.

"But as to land cleared from forest, the productiveness of it seems to depend entirely on a covering of vegetable earth, which in its forest state had, for perhaps thousands of years, been forming and accumulating on its surface, and of which the fertility is so great, that but little labor and no manure is required to make it bear, year after year, abundant crops of grain. Every successive crop, however, extracts a portion of the vegetable principle the soil contains, and in a certain time, longer or shorter, according to the thickness of the covering, it will be entirely deprived of its vivifying powers, and reduced to a *caput mortuum.*

"Whether after this, the land may be of any use, will depend on the quality of the subsoil; and however rich the quality of the subsoil may be, it will, before it will carry crops of grain, have to be fertilized by being brought to the surface, and fed with proper manures. How much better then must it be, by a right mode of cultivation, to maintain the present valuable surface soil in its fruitful state."

This is the most sound practical reasoning I ever read from the pen of an agriculturist. The Captain is happy in his remarks, and they deserve the warmest thanks of every inexperienced farmer. It is my decided opinion,that much of the long-cleared land in the United States is fast deteriorating from constant cropping ; and as soon as the vegetable matter is exhausted, the extensive territory, without a reformed system, will not bear sufficient produce to feed the immense increase of population that are coming in from all parts of the world. An impoverished soil is like a drunken man—a useless, worthless lump of clay, of no benefit to man or beast.

" There is not in the States, as there is in Britain, (says the Captain) that peculiar feeling of the *amor patriæ*, which attaches a man to a particular locality, and probably induces him to use means for establishing it as the home of his descendants. In the former country, the abrogation of the law of primogeniture in a manner precludes the establishment of family estates; and land is so universally an article of commerce, that to ask a gentleman to sell his house and land, is just as permissible as it were in England to ask a dealer to sell his horse. Hence, perhaps, arose a migratory propensity, observable in the generality of persons engaged in the business of agriculture, and hence the difficulty of reconciling them to meliorating modes of husbandry, involving fixedness of residence. The States, many of them argue, are a wide field, and there is in them plenty of land to be reclaimed. It will therefore be long ere it be necessary to take heed how soils are managed. When one farm ceases to be profitably productive, another may be cleared ; and economizing the fructifying quality of the soil, is therefore a matter not yet worth consideration. In short, a profit which is immediate is the profit which most of them seek after : and consequently an expenditure on land, which is to be productive of a permanent but only gradual return, is repugnant to their habits. To those who are actuated by such views, it were probably vain to remark, that although the States are indeed 'a wide field,' the increase of population there is astonishingly rapid ; that the clearing of the forest has already extended so far as to excite in some quarters an apprehension of a dearth of timber, and that there is reason to think a great many years may not elapse before all the reclaimable land shall have been brought into cultivation. With a view to the public interest of the states, it seems there a matter of serious importance that the destruction of land by irremediable impoverishment should be prevented. How far this might be accomplished by the establishment of institutions in the different states, having for their object the encouragement of approved modes of husbandry, I may not presume to say ; but I may refer to the ' Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland,' as an instance of the immense advantages which a country may derive from a general association of its leading men, encouraging by their own example, and rewarding by liberal premiums, improvements in the various branches of rural economy. More remarkable testimony to the benefits diffused by that society, could not have been found, than has been afforded by its having been taken as a model for England, in an association lately established and now in operation in that country.

"But although it is not difficult to show that an alteration of the practice of husbandry in the states is called for by the regard to the public advantage, the improvements I would suggest for the adoption of the American farmer, are such as I conceive would not diminish immediate profit, but on the contrary, materially increase it.

" The principal error in American cultivation is the frequent repetition of culmiferous crops, without the application of a sufficiency of manure to compensate for the matter they abstract from the soil.

"The arable land in those parts of the states visited by me, is in general a rich friable loam, or a rich vegetable mould; in both cases such as, in Scotland, would be deemed peculiarly adapted for green crops of all descriptions.

"On such lands, therefore, may successfully be followed a system of convertible husbandry, based on a rotation, which an experienced farmer will have no difficulty in adapting to his peculiar soil, and so arranged that the severity of grain crops may be modified or counteracted by the alternation of grass and green crops in their proper order. Under such a system the soil would be nourished and supported by manure used for the green crops ; and the green crops, such as turnips, potatoes and mangel wurtzel, would be consumed in winter by stock properly foddered and littered ; and thus manure in sufficient quantity would every year be manufactured, the land would be kept in good tilth, stock of greater value would be reared, and upon the whole, the receipts of the farmer would be increased in amount with little or no additional outlay.

"This is not a prediction resting upon mere theory; for at a period not yet beyond memory, before the introduction of convertible husbandry in Scotland, it was nothing uncommon to see the farmer's stock so attenuated by the dearth and insufficiency of winter food, as to be almost unable to walk to the pastures in the spring. But with convertible husbandry came the cultivation of turnips, and other green crops before unknown. By the use of such green crops, the straw came to be converted into valuable manure ; the soil was rendered greatly more productive ; and now, at the end of winter, the stock of a Scotch farmer is not the mere skin and bone of former times, but in the best condition ; or, if such has been the purpose, ready for the butcher. It is generally supposed that the high price of labor in America, operates as a drawback in the business of farming; but there are compensating circumstances which, in the consideration of this matter, ought to be kept in view. Although the nominal price of a day's labor is greater in America than Britain, the quantum of labor purchased by it is also greater. Thus at Geneseo, I found a laborer's wages to be about three shillings per diem, with board and lodging ; but then let it be considered what he gives in return : he works from sunrise to sunset, with short intervals for breakfast and dinner ; or he ploughs two acres a day ; or in a day he mows between two and three acres of wheat, or two acres of clover."

Here the Captain and I do not agree. The price of labor is a very great drawback to the American farmer. He does not get so much from it as the Captain imagines; nor do I think that a man having to work so many hours can work faithfully. It is my belief that ten hours a day for a man to labor is quite sufficient : if he cannot do a day's work in ten hours, he cannot in fourteen. If a man works as he ought to work, he can tire himself in ten hours ; this gives him a little time to rest his body

and cultivate his mind, as well as his master's soil, and makes him a faithful servant.

As regards ploughing two acres a day with a team, is a remark I should have thought the Captain would not have made. It is impossible for a team to plough it, and plough it well. They may rub it about, or turn over a wide furrow ; but this, in my opinion, is very injurious to the soil. Bad ploughing will produce more pernicious weeds than any other indolent mode of farming.

I need not make any comment on the high standing the Captain has obtained as an agriculturist in Scotland. I will refer my readers to the account of the public dinner given to him by the principal nobility and farmers, as a compliment for the good he had done his country, by the noble and praiseworthy example he had shown. In short he is a man of thorough sound sense, excellent judgment, and a practical farmer.

Albany, May, 1842.

[For the Northern Light.]

REPORT OF THE WEATHER, &c.

BY C. N. BEMENT.

THE very warm and genial weather in April gave us promise of an early spring. Vegetation, arousing from its torpid state, started vigorously, and was considered generally from ten to twelve days in advance of last year ; but the chilling influences of the weather, the past month, and the absence of sufficient rain, so essential to the grass crop, together with the cold frosty nights we experienced after the 15th, retarded the growth very much; still we are in advance of last year.

May was ushered in by a storm of hail, rain and some thunder and lightning. From the 4th to the 8th, we had several light showers, succeeded by cold, drying breezes and some blustering gales.

The blossoms of the lilac and apple made their appearance on the 15th, in favorable situations, and some pieces of rye were in blossom and nearly in full head. The dry state of the soil enabled the farmer to prepare his ground and plant his corn at an early day, but it was slow in vegetating, in consequence of the drought, and did not make its appearance as soon as could have been wished.

On the morning of the 21st, we found the mercury in the thermometer down to 27°, ice the thickness of a cent, grass stiff and crispy—potatoe tops, tomatoes, peppers and asparagus, bore evidence of the presence of severe frost. Fears are entertained for the safety of our fruit, as a less severe frost was supposed to have destroyed the apple crop last year. The cherry and plumb had shed their blossoms.

On the 24th, we were again visited by a slight frost, and in the P. M. the wind changed to the south, commenced raining, and terminated in a smart shower in the evening, which revived vegetation that was langushing for the want of moisture. We also had another frost on the 26th, and on the 27th we were greeted with a drizzling rain, which continued for several hours, saturating the soil about three inches. This storm, though not half enough, has imparted a cheering aspect to the country.

On the 29th, we had refreshing showers with a warm breeze from the souths; till the earth, like a noted drunkard, is yet thirsty, and many plants are not advancing much in consequence. The past spring, though unfavorable in some respects, has been very favorable in others. The dry and fair weather has enabled the labors of the field to be prosecuted without hindrance, and the spring crops have been got in early, and in better condition, than we have known for several years, and we have not heard any complaints of the failure of vegetation of seeds. which has been so common heretofore. Great complaints are however made of the depredations of the *wire worm* and *grub*, on barley as well as corn. On examining my field of barley, which had a patchy appearance, I found to my consternation, the work of destruction going on at a rapid rate; in some parts of the field on small spots, hardly a green spear is to be found, and on raising those which are yellow, I found them nearly severed, about one inch below the surface, and on digging around the root, the enemy was discovered. Those who neglected to tar and roll their seed-corn previous to planting, have not only suffered from the wire-worm, and the grub, but the crows have waged a war of extermination on the corn crop. Oats, in some sections, have suffered from the depredations of the wire-worm, and is rather backward in growth. Clover has "took" well and looks very promising. The general aspect of grass is not very encouraging, and a short crop of hay is anticipated. Pastures rather short, and with few exceptions, feed scarce; but we light up the bright lamp of hope, because we know summer, with all her much admired charms, is just at hand.

The prospect of the farmer for the ensuing year, though he may be blessed with good crops, is anything but cheering; produce with few exceptions is selling at ruinous prices, and hastily tending to a still further reduction. The depressed state of the times has never fairly reached the farmers until now. Expenses on the farm will be circumscribed as much as possible, and the work which would have been done, could they have afforded it, is now, as a consequence, and through necessity, left undone, and the laboring man is the first person who feels severely the effects of low prices. We, as farmers, are applied to for labor, which we cannot employ except to a very limited extent. It is quite frightful to see the number of unemployed laborers, daily walking about in search of labor without being able to obtain any, whereas heretofore, sufficient men could scarcely be obtained to do the necessary work on a farm.

Upon the whole the farmer has as little cause of complaint, as the professional man, the merchant or the mechanic. They are all dependent on the farmer for their very subsistence—it must come from the soil.

"The Hebrews named the month of their calendar which is synonymous with this fifth of our own *seven*, from a Chaldeac word signifying "to rejoice;" the Romans called it Maia, in honor of Rhea, the Goddess of the earth, it being one of her epithets, according to Macrobius; though Plutarch said it was named after Maia, the mother of Mercury; and Ovid maintained it was designated in honor of the patricians, (*à majoribus,*) neither of which appear so appropriate as the derivation assiged by Macrobius. The Anglo-Saxons knew it as *tri-milchi*, because their cows, stimulated by the fresh herbage, were so productive of milk as to enable the proprietors to bring them with advantage to the pail three times a day. The name of May was introduced by the Normans. Romulus made it comprise thirty-one days, which have never been diminished."

Well might the Easterns consider this the rejoicing month of nature, and the Romans dedicate it to the earth, for in our hemisphere, during its days, the earth is in its gayest, happiest appearance—it is her own high festival of beauty and delight, and has been known as the "merry" month in every age to which our records reach. In the days of the more simple manners, the first of May was in every village the merriest day in Merry England; for every hamlet had a May-pole, (hence as "tall as a Maypole,") on its green, around which the village population gathered, the elderlies to share a cup of neighborship, and to talk of bye-gone Mayings, when they danced as joyfully around the "May-colmn" as their children were now tripping before them. The custom is almost extinct, and with it one incentive to rustic virtue and amiability, for that maiden was usually selected Queen of May, who was most generally beloved among her village associates, and no esteem is general but such as is merited.

Three Hills Farm, May, 1842.

[From the Cincinnati Chronicle of 21st March.]

STATISTICS—AGRICULTURE OF EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES.

We have before us "McGregor's Statistics," which contains a curious table, compiled from one prepared by Baron Von Malchus, Minister of Finance in Wurtemburgh in 1828. It exhibits the agriculture and live stock of all the nations of Europe, in a manner similar to the statistics of the United States.

The total amount of grain then raised in some of the important nations were as follows. Grain here includes wheat, barley, oats and rye :

Great Britain,	262,500,000	bushels.
Prussia,	145,000,000	"
Denmark,	40,133,000	"
Austria,	366,000,000	"
France,	333,847,300	"
Spain,	68,000,000	"

If we divide these results by the number of inhabitants in each country, we get the number of bushels raised to each soul :

Great Britain, to each soul,	12	bushels.
Denmark, "	20	"
Prussia, "	12	"
Austria, "	14	"
France, "	7	"
Spain, "	5	"

It appears, then, that the northern part of Germany raises a much larger portion of grain than either England, France, or Spain.

In the United States, the amount of the same grains (wheat, barley, oats and rye) raised, is in the aggregate about 317,000,000 bushels—to each soul about 18¼ bushels. The United States, then, raise more grain than any country in Europe, except Denmark, and much more than the average produced in Europe.

Let us now compare the live stock.

Of cattle, the following are raised in the above named countries :

Great Britain,	10,500,000
Prussia,	4,275,000
Denmark,	1,607,000
Austria,	9,912,000
France,	6,681,000
Spain,	2,500,000

These, again, divided by the population, give the following results:

England, to each soul,	1-2	of one.
Prussia, "	1-3	"
Denmark, "	4-5ths	"
Austria, "	3-11ths	"
France, "	1-5th	"
Spain, "	1-5th	"

Denmark and England have much the largest portion of cattle, though Russia, not included in the above, has nearly as large a portion of cattle as England. In the United States, the number of cattle is about 13,500,000—to each soul, 4-5ths. The proportion, again, is nearly or quite as high as that of Denmark, and higher than the average of Europe. But if we examine particular states, we find some that have a larger number of cattle in proportion than any part of Europe. Thus, in Vermont and New-York, there are more cattle than there are living souls.

Of horses, the European proportion is thus :

Great Britain, to each soul,	1-11th	
Prussia, "	1-10th	
Denmark, "	1-4th	
Austria, "	1-16th	
France, "	1-42th	
Spain, "	1-8th	

In the United States, of horses there are about 3,500,000—which is to each soul, 1-5th. This, also, is a larger proportion than that of Europe.

The comparison in swine is interesting. The proportion of hogs to each soul is—

England,	1-4th
Prussia,	1-8th
Denmark,	1-6th
Austria,	1-6th
France,	1-7th
Spain,	1-13th

In the United States, the total number of swine is about 21,000,000—which is to each soul, 1¼ ; far greater than any country of Europe.

The number of hogs in the United States is greater than in all England, France, Prussia, Austria, Spain, Denmark, Bavaria, and the Netherlands, making a population exceeding one hundred and twenty millions.

Of sheep, the proportion in Europe to each soul, is thus :

Great Britain,	2
Prussia,	3-4ths
Denmark,	2-3ds
Austria,	2-5ths
France,	1 1-10th
Spain,	1

In the United States, the number is 19,000,000—the proportion is 1 1-8th. In this article, England is in advance of the United States. In the state of New-York, however, the proportion of sheep is as high as in England.

There is, however, another aspect to this comparison. What is the relative product per acre ? We have not the means of knowing the number of acres of arable land in the United States ; but here are some local statistics from which we can gather something.

The number of acres of improved land in the state of New-York, is about	10,000,000
In Great Britain,	98,000,000

The proportion is nearly 10 to 1.

The grain raised of the kinds mentioned, is in New-York,	38,000,000
In Great Britain,	262,000,000

The proportion in New-York is the greatest.

Cattle in New-York,	2,642,000
" Great Britain,	10,000,000
Sheep in New-York,	5,381,000
" Great Britain,	44,000,000

In grain, cattle and sheep, then, the state of New-York raises more per acre than Great Britain.

If the comparison were made only of the agricultural districts of England, the result would not be the same ; for England does raise more wheat per acre, under good cultivation, than the United States. But when the hills of Scotland, the bogs of Ireland, and the fens and moors are taken into consideration, the United States is the most productive country by far.

In this comparative view of Europe and the United States, we may see the true ground of that physical growth which characterizes the United States, and which undoubtedly must characterize it for many centuries to come.

Literature and Science.

SCENES IN HAMBURGH AND ITS VICINITY.

[From unpublished notes of an excursion to Europe.]

BY JOHN A. DIX.

THE recent conflagration of a large portion of Hamburgh, has no parallel in our day, excepting in the great fire in our own commercial metropolis, in December, 1835. For four successive days the raging element reigned uncontrolled. Millions of property were consumed. Two thousand houses were leveled with the dust. Many lives were lost. Household furniture, merchandize and property of all kinds, carried out of dwellings and ware houses with the hope of preserving them, blocked up the streets, and rendered all attempts to arrest the flames more difficult. And to crown all, plunder and rapine raised their hydra heads amid the general confusion, the visitation of Providence having thus become more awful and calamitous through the unbridled passions of men. That the city will rise again from its ruins there is no doubt. Its commercial importance is such that it must;—much sooner, perhaps, than is anticipated. Enterprise and capital may, as in the burnt district in New-York, build up on its blackened and smouldering remains edifices of greater solidity and beauty than those which have been destroyed. But this regeneration will long be associated with the remembrance of the want and wretchedness, and the sudden transitions from wealth to poverty, which always accompany such extensive devastations. Our recollections of a city, which is now the scene of so much calamity, have been refreshed by the accounts of the recent conflagration; and as it is naturally a subject of interest to our readers, we annex a few notes, taken some years ago, during a visit to that city and the adjacent country.

On the 18th of July, (the third day from London,) we entered the river Elbe, and at Cuxhaven, on its southern shore, we took on board a large number of passengers. This little place is of no importance excepting from its harbor, which is commodious and safe. In the 14th century it was conquered by Hamburgh, and still remains a dependency of that free city, from which it is about 60 miles distant. In two hours we passed by the Danish provincial town of Gluckstadt, in Holstein, and in half an hour more the British station of Stade, on the opposite coast of Hanover. This station affords, among numerous others, a striking exhibition of the power of Great Britain. It commands the channel of the Elbe, and vessels passing it are subjected to a custom-house visitation.

We found the banks of the Elbe low until we approached Hamburgh, and not altogether unlike those of the Delaware below Philadelphia. At about a German mile (4½ English) below Hamburgh, they become elevated, and present some very interesting prospects. The Hamburgh merchants have chosen this part of the river for their summer residences, and many beautiful country seats, some of them in the best taste, show themselves upon the banks embosomed in the foliage of trees and vines. There are several little villages lying between the shore and the summit of the bank; and close upon the margin of the water there is a long unbroken line of fishermen's huts, prettily ornamented with flowers and ivy, forming altogether a very romantic and picturesque view.

Hamburgh is one of the most important commercial places in Germany, and during the thousand years of its existence, for it was founded by Charlemagne in the early part of the ninth century, it has borne its share of the vicissitudes of fortune. In the thirteenth century it took an active part in the formation of the Hanseatic League. This great commercial confederacy once numbered eighty-five cities, it conquered and dethroned kings, and in the fifteenth century it sent a fleet of 250 vessels against one of its enemies. Hamburgh and Lubeck alone, the two great founders of the association, with Bremen, are all that remain as free Hanseatic cities. The ancient union between them still subsists.

At the commencement of the present century Hamburgh was at the zenith of its prosperity. In 1803, the French entered Hanover, took possession of the bailiwick of Ritzebüttel, in which Cuxhaven lies, and closed the Elbe to British vessels. For more than ten years Hamburgh was occupied from time to time by the French, it was more than once the scene of combat, and under the joint influence of restrictions on its commerce, the fountain of its prosperity, and the exactions of its military masters, it was reduced to a state of comparative idleness and poverty. As a free town it is now rapidly regaining its former wealth, its commerce is again active and lucrative, and every thing wears the aspect of prosperity. It has about 120,000 inhabitants: it has exclusive jurisdiction over several towns, which have an aggregate of about 25,000 inhabitants; and in common with Lubeck, it has jurisdiction over the bailiwick of Bergedorf, the Vierlands, and some towns in Lauenburgh.

Notwithstanding the uncouth aspect of the buildings and the uninviting aspect of some of the streets, it is a highly interesting town, particularly the northern part, which circles about a beautiful lake of about half a mile in breadth. One of its borders is occupied by a shaded walk, where the burghers are accustomed to take their evening rambles; another is covered with cultivated fields; and the two others are flanked by rows of dwelling-houses, overlooking the water. On the surface of the lake are seen pleasure boats in constant motion, and floating baths with their narrow platforms and wide coverings; and in all directions swans appear gliding over the shallow waves, their snow-white plumage glittering in the beams of the sun.

Although a large portion of the town is built in the ancient style, Hamburgh is not without modern edifices of great architectural beauty. It has some very fine public buildings, and the church of St. Michael, towering to the height of 450 feet, is a very remarkable edifice, though in strict architectural taste it is not faultless.

After dinner on the day of our arrival, we took a carriage and rode to the farthest extremity of the Danish town of Altona, about two miles distant, to attend a fair, where all the neighboring country was assembled. In the streets of Hamburgh a death-like stillness reigned; the city had poured forth its living contents, and neither man nor beast was seen to break the universal silence and solitude. As we approached the scene of festivity, the picture was directly reversed. Every street and lane and bypath was filled with the outpourings of the adjacent towns. Carriages and horses, men and women, children and dogs, were promiscuously intermingled; and now and then the helmet of a militia hussar appeared above the ocean of heads, as he forced his way from point to point in the vain hope of reducing to a state of order the universal chaos and confusion. There never was a finer scene for the pencil of a painter. The great mass of the actors were in the true Flemish taste, presenting just such figures as have been grouped for hundreds of years by the masters of the low countries. The close caps and wide petticoats of the women, the thick hose and capacious breeches of the men, and the broad features of both were the same as those, which are conspicuous in the graphic representations of the last century. The scenery, amid which these grotesque objects were moving, was beautiful beyond description. We saw nothing more highly embellished in England. The roads were lined with country-seats surrounded by richly ornamented gardens and pleasure grounds, and these were all thrown open by the proprietors to receive the gathering multitudes. As we were gazing upon this novel and exciting scene, the night fell, and the better part of the assemblage turned their steps towards their homes. As we entered Hamburgh through its broad expanse of enchanting environs, we found the city restored to life. A crowd of carriages filled with genteel people, flanked by dense bodies of pedestrians, were taking possession of the recently deserted streets, and the general aspect of animation and activity was revived.

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After our very hasty visit to Hamburgh, we set out for Kiel in Holstein, on an estuary of the Baltic. A stranger in Hamburgh, who wishes to pass from that city to Kiel, finds himself beset with difficulties, which are not to be overcome without some inconvenience. The only public conveyance is an open wagon from the neighboring town of Altona; and unless he has a carriage and horses of his own, he is compelled by the regulations of the Danish government to take post-horses at the regular stations through the province of Holstein. Between the free cities of Hamburgh and Lubeck, horses may be hired for the whole journey. But in travelling across the Danish territory, the rule referred to can only be dispensed with by special permission of the post master at Altona. Through the intercession of friends we procured one, and it enabled us to hire a carriage and horses to carry us to Neuminster—more than half our journey—from which place we designed to take post-horses, as we supposed our own would be fatigued. Our equipage to this station was a very genteel one: but after making the change, we presented the most incongruous aspect imaginable. We still retained the carriage, with which we commenced our journey; but between this and our cattle there was a most deplorable want of harmony. They were two long, raw-boned black plough-mares, who seemed from the melancholy manner, in which they hung their heads, to be altogether disheartened by the unwonted duty imposed on them. The harness was principally of ropes, though a thong of leather occasionally appeared as a connecting link between the hempen bands and traces: and as to blinders or cruppers, these are refinements, which will probably, for a century to come, be foreign to the post-horse economy of the province of Holstein. Our postilion was a good-natured Dutchman, with just such a full and rubicund face as painters are in the habit of ascribing to the rosy God himself. He was clad in a long frock-coat of coarse scarlet, dangling to his heels, with cuffs and collar of yellow flannel and huge metal buttons, which had suffered a woful dereliction of lustre since the day they came from the hands of the manufacturer. At his left side hung a horn, with multitudinous curves and windings, suspended from his shoulder by a yellow cord; and whenever a wagon appeared in front, he made it send forth such a strain of brazen and sepulchral tones as to rouse even the heavy drivers, who were sure to be snoring in the approaching vehicles. In this novel array, and with this dismal flourish of trumpets, we entered Kiel; but instead of finding ourselves objects of merriment, it was quite manifest that we were mistaken for continental nobility, (we were probably not assigned to a higher rank than some of the smaller principalities of the Germanic confederation,) and we observed many a neck extended, and many an eye strained to catch a glimpse of the ensigns of our dignity as we rolled along the pavement.

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About a month had elapsed since we had left Hamburgh, and we were approaching it from the territories of Lubeck, in a direction nearly opposite to the one which we had taken on our way to Kiel. A few English miles from the city, we entered the little Danish town of Wandsbeck. It is prettily situated in the midst of groves, and its vicinity to the city has made it a favorite resort for the burghers. It was Sunday; and in the true spirit of the continent, the sounds of revelry and merriment were mingling in honor of the day. We stopped a few moments before the door of an inn; and while our coachman was feeding his horses with rye-bread—the common provender of the country—we were listening to the music which came from the second story, and marking the gay forms of the waltzers, as they passed from window to window around the hall. For about ten minutes the dancing and music were uninterrupted; but suddenly both ceased, and the cries of riot and the bustle of conflict resounded from the apartment. Female forms were seen hurrying by the windows, and every thing that caught the eye was in unison with the impressions upon the ear. From all this confusion, we expected the explosion of some overwhelming calamity. But, after a moment of suspense, the catastrophe was developed in the sudden appearance of a brawny Dane, without hat or coat, and a little the worse for liquor, rapidly descending the stair-case. He had probably been guilty of some unwarrantable freedom among the dancers, a detachment of whom were earnestly suggesting their desire for his absence by making a vigorous application of shoe-leather to such parts of his person as were most exposed in the descent. There is, perhaps, nothing more ludicrous than a heavy, massive frame, fitted only for perpetual silence, drowsiness and phlegm, animated by passion into incongruous motions of activity. The whole scene was inimitably fine, but it was greatly enriched by the appearance of a thin, hungry-looking French lacquey in livery, who, as the fugitive crossed the threshold, presented his hat and coat with an air of taunting civility, which exasperated him infinitely more than all the abuse he had received within doors. For the first time he assumed an offensive attitude; but at this moment our postilion cracked his whip, and as we rolled on, we heard the sounds of music renewed, and observed the forms of the dancers whirling again in giddy circles around the room.

As we approached Hamburgh, one of the finest scenes presented itself which we had beheld since we left England. The wind had been blowing with violence during the day; but at the approach of night it subsided into a gentle breeze, scarcely strong enough to keep in motion the numberless sails of the mills, which were spread over the whole face of the landscape. At this moment we came in sight of the beau-

tiful level of rich fields and gardens surrounding the city of Hamburgh, the spires of which seemed, across the unbroken plain, to be emerging from the earth, rather than to rest upon its surface. The side of every object facing the west was lighted up by the rays of the setting sun, with a degree of splendor sufficiently rich and brilliant for all the purposes of beauty, but in which the glare of midday was so softened, that the eye rested upon it without pain; and the opposite side was thrown into a mass of shadow, which extended itself along the level plain until it was lost in the distance. All nature seemed to be relapsing into tranquillity and silence after the agitations of the day: and every object, which the agency of man had added to the scene, was in harmony with its natural features. The pastures along the road were filled with cattle fatigued with grazing, and gathered into sober groups: vehicles were seen here and there crawling sluggishly towards the city: and the sails of the wind-mills were performing their dull rotation with an air of inertness which seemed but the prelude to an immediate state of rest. Such was the beauty of the whole picture that the natural associations of approaching night would have mingled our enjoyment with pain but for the full and luminous orb of the moon, which was just rising in the opposite east, and already promised, before the sun had withdrawn his beams, to light up the scene he was about to abandon, with undiminished lustre.

[For the Northern Light.]

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

BY WILLIAM G. BISHOP.

FIRST among the English poets in point of time as well as point of genius, is CHAUCER, and he is therefore deservedly looked upon as the father of genuine English poetry. The obsolete words and ancient style of orthography have caused his works to be but little read. Several attempts have been made to modernize the style, but with indifferent success. Still there are many who despite this obstacle, delight to revel in the quaint description, silent humor, and keen satire that pervade the productions of Chaucer. In order to appreciate the brilliancy of his genius, it is necessary to consider the state of the language and literature at the time, when meteorlike he burst forth in all the novelty of style, originality of idea, and beauty of expression, that charmed and delighted the people, and at the same time, laid the corner stone of the now glorious fabric of English literature.

After the conquest, while the process was going on, by which the Norman French of the conquerers and the Saxon of the conquered, became melted as it were into each other, and formed the basis of the present English language, there flourished a host of writers, who wrote rhyming chronicles, and long, romantic and improbable tales, which were sung by strolling minstrels to the melody of the harp and lute, at the courts of kings and princes, and for the entertainment of men of rank. Of these productions peculiar to the age, and most probably possessing but little intrinsic merit, but few have been preserved. Robert of Gloucester, one of the poets, or rather pioneers of verse in this era, has left us his history of Merlin and Arthur, a work more generally known at this day, than any of the productions of the writers of that period. But these early efforts of the British muse were not all committed to writing: on the contrary, many of them were improvisatorized by the minstrels themselves, after the manner of the Troubadours of Provence, that hot-bed of romance and chivalry in the south of France, from whence most undoubtedly the custom had its origin. The language too at that time was most uncouth and meagre, as the following verse from a poem written in the year 1307, on the occasion of the death of Edward I. of England will testify. It was the intention of Edward to have gone on a crusade to the Holy Land, which was prevented by his death, and the lines quoted, it will be seen are in allusion to this fact:—

"Jerusalem thou has ilore
The flour of all chivalrie
Now Kyng Edward liveth na more,
Alas that he yet shoulde deye!
He wolde ha reed full heyge
Our banners that bueth broht to rounde;
Wel longer we mowe clefe and crie
Er we such a Kyng hav yfounde."

The wanderings of the Troubadours, and the lays of Provence, then the land of chivalry and of love, had the effect to kindle the poetical taste and fire in almost all the countries which might then, comparatively speaking, have been considered as civilized. "Theirs was a style of poetry highly suitable to the age in which they flourished—an age in which the spirit of military enterprise, fomented by religious enthusism, and a fantastic devotion to the fair sex, prompted men to brave danger in every shape and at every hand, to accomplish deeds of renown, and to gain fame. It was this influence that brought out the fathers of Italian song Dante and Petrarch, who then gave to the world those magnificent effusions of genius, which have won for them a name and a fame, destined to be forgotten only when civilization shall itself decay.

It was at this period—cotemporaneous with Petrarch and but a short time after Dante, and doubtless, through the same influence, that the genius and talent of Geoffrey Chaucer broke forth—like the morning sun upon the dawning day, amid what had hitherto been all darkness and obscurity in English literature—in those productions which have placed him pre-eminent as the father of genuine English poetry. Of his early history but little at this late day is known. He lived between the years 1360 and 1400, and flourished at the courts of Edward III, and the brave and chivalrous Richard II, or Cœur de Lion, although, as appears to be the fate of poets, he was little thought of during his own lifetime. It was left to posterity to award to him the laurels which he so richly deserved, and so gloriously earned. Chaucer was well learned in everything that constituted the education or knowledge of the time, and he also possessed a native and innate genius of the highest order, and was thoroughly imbued with all the pristime, vigor of thought, originality of conception, and beauty of expression, that appertain to the true and genuine poet. He was also an extensive traveller, and a shrewd observer of character and manners, a quality which he employs to advantange in the most of his effusions.

His style is very similar to that of the great Italian masters, Boccaccio, Dante and Petrarch. The former appears to have been his favorite, from the fact of the similarity of the plan of some of his poems with the Decameron. His measure is a flowing easy one, and is characterised by great pathos, beauty of description, and if it can be so said, real melody. Chaucer's best work, and the one most familiar with readers of the present day, is his "*Canterbury Tales.*" The design of this work is evidently taken from Boccaccio's Decameron. It consists of a series of pathetic, humorous and satirical narratives, related by a company of pilgrims on their way to the shrine of Thomas á Becket at Canterbury. The poem opens with a description of the various persons, some twenty or thirty in number, composing the miscellaneous company. These sketches are curious and interesting, from the fact of their pourtraying characters and life at the time. The stories narrated by the pilgrims are of a varied character, some of them relating to chivalrous deeds, and others to humble life, and abound in quaint humor and brilliant sallies of wit. The following is an extract from this poem in its original words. It is a description of one of the pilgrims, a miller:

"The Miller was a stout carl for the nones,
Ful big he was of braun and eke of bones,
That proved wel, for over all ther he came,
At wrestling he wolde bere away the ram.
He was short-shoulder'd, brode, a thikke gnarre,
Ther n'as no dore he n'olde heve of barre,
Or brek at a running with his hede.
His herd as any sowe or fox was rede,
And thereto brode as though it were a spade;
Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
A wert, and thereon stood a tuft of heres
Rede as the bristles of a sowe's eres.
His nose-thirles blacke wer and wide;
A swerd and bokeler bare he by his side;
His mouth as wide was as a forneis;
Wel coulde he stelen corne and stelen thries;
And yet he had a thoom of golde parde,
A white cote and a blew hode wared he;
A baggepipe wel could he blow and soune,
And therewithal he brought us out of toune."

Chaucer wrote many other poems, but his "Canterbury Tales" is looked upon as his master piece. Another extract will serve to show the pathos of Chaucer. It is from Mr. C. Cowden Clark's *Riches of Chaucer*, published in London in 1835, and is one of, if not the most successful, attempts to modernize the spelling and orthography. The extract below is from the dying words of Arcite, and a critic has remarked that the structure of the verse may be said to aid in its effect, its breaks and changes seeming to represent the sighs and sobbings of a broket heart.

"Alas the woes! alas the paine's strong,
That I for you have suffered and so long!
Alas the death! alas mine Emily!
Alas departing of our company!
Alas mine hearte's queen! alas my wife!
Mine hearte's lady, ender of my life!
What is this world? what asken men to have?
Now with his love, now in his colde grave
Alone withouten any company.
Farewell my sweet—Farewell mine Emily!
And softe take me in your armes tway,
For love of God, and hearkeneth what I say!"

Chaucer was also a prose writer of no ordinary merit. Two of the Canterbury Tales are in prose, and he wrote a philosophic meditative sort of work, called the "*Testament of Love.*" But it is in his poetry that he excels; and it is his poetry alone that has placed him in the same eternal niche of fame with Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton. His name and fame stand forth in the sea of English literature and history as a towering landmark, marking the commencement of that improvement, which, for between four and five hundred years, has been gradually taking place in our language and literature. Although over four hundred years have rolled away since Geoffrey Chaucer flourished, his works are appreciated and read with as much pleasure and delight as ever, notwithstanding the obsolete and ancient spelling and orthography. It is this alone that prevents them from being quite as popular and as generally read as the works of the other British classics.

Of Chaucer's history, but little account has descended to us. It is thought, however, that he escaped the blighting influence of poverty and want, which has afflicted most of our poets, and lived in comparative affluence. Indeed, it could not have been otherwise, seeing that he was well educated, and in those days education was not be obtained without great trouble and still greater expense, and was besides an extensively travelled man. "Peace to his manes!"

Albany, June, 1842.

[For the Northern Light.]

REMARKS UPON THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION PURSUED IN THE RENSSELAER INSTITUTE.

BY JAMES HALL.

IN nearly all pursuits of human life, our age witnesses the most rapid progress in improvement, and this improvement comes not by following old methods or systems, but by adopting new, until finally a better is obtained, or an approach nearer to perfection is made. On the subject of teaching, however, we are still too much disposed to follow the systems which have been in use for centuries, the argument being that our present system is very good, and we prefer it to any other of which we have no experience as to its practical effects.

Now this is precisely the reverse of the manner in which man acquires knowledge when left to his own resources. Experiment—experience, has been the mode of acquiring knowledge, as is proved by all history, from the time that Adam was placed in the garden of Eden to the present day. Mankind first obtained knowledge by observing nature, for then there were no other means; and books were not made until observation enabled men to record what they had seen or heard, whether of nature, of art, or of language. Education then, was first pursued by observation and experiment; at length tradition was added, and finally books. As books have multiplied so have we departed from the original mode of acquiring knowledge, and the observation of nature has been left for words, which are but the signs of ideas; and this reversed process has prevented, in a great measure, the pupil from acquiring the ideas of which the words are significant. I am far from wishing to undervalue the knowledge of books, and the cultivation of fancy or imagination; but the exclusive attention to such knowledge does not generally qualify mankind at large for their duties. They are a second time compelled to learn when entering upon the business of life, and their previous knowledge, if remembered, is little more than a recreation for hours of leisure.

This matter can never be remedied till we go back to the first principles; till we substitute in early life, the study of nature for that of books; till things are learned, ideas acquired; and then we can profitably extend our kowledge to the signs of these ideas, and their connection with each other. And this course of education I am confident will yet be adopted, and the time will come when a child's knowledge will not be estimated by the number of pages which he has learned, but by his knowledge of existing things and their mutual relations. By such a course, the child is greatly advanced; he will then go to his books with alacrity and zest, for he then feels that he has some use for that kind of knowledge, having already a foundation upon which to place in the proper order the signs and the ideas he is to acquire—learning, then, is never a task, but always a pleasure. But on the other hand, what is the result with the greater part of children when placed early at school, and compelled to learn the appointed lesson? It is now felt to be a task indeed, instead of a pleasure, and he leaves his own little plans and pursuits with regret in order to take his book at school.

We all know in how many cases the years of youth are almost fruitlessly spent in study, with but little progress, and the result is disappointment to the parent. In many such cases, I have seen by a judicious change in the mode of acquiring knowledge, not only pleasure manifested, but a progress

which was not to be stayed until completely successful.

Having, however, no intention of writing an essay upon education, I have merely said this in connection with some notice of the plan of instruction pursued at the Rensselaer Institute, which the united testimony of every one who has been either an officer or pupil in the school, concurs in admitting to be superior to any other now in use. The recent death of Prof. Eaton, who has been at the head of the institution since its commencement, about eighteen years since, has called public attention to the subject; and induced the inquiry whether this plan of instruction shall be continued, or suffered to expire at its parent source? Whatever may be the result in the present instance, I think there can be no doubt but when this system in all its details shall be more thoroughly understood, and the minds of young men shall be directed to acquiring a knowledge of the existing things of this world, with their relations to one another, and to the great system of the universe, instead of to words or sounds, with few or no ideas of tangible things, that it will supersede all others now practised.

The following extract from a communication of Richard Owen, Esq. who had spent three years at the celebrated Fellenberg school, and who was intimately acquainted with the different systems pursued in Europe, will enable one to judge of his views of the Rensselaer system. This extract is from one of a series of communications on the subject of education, furnished for the Southwestern Sentinel, published at Evansville, Indiana, and I believe the whole series would be very acceptable to this community. The following relates to the school established in Troy, by the late Hon. STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER, and to another similar institution in Kentucky:—

"I proceed now, as it is the next subject in order, and not very dissimilar from monitorial instruction, to describe the method of Mutual Instruction devised and successfully carried into execution by Stephen Van Rensselaer.

"To give a correct view of the design of this enlightened philanthropist, I shall quote part of his letter to Rev. Dr. Blatchford, president of the board of trustees, in these words:

"'Dear Sir—I have established a school at the north end of Troy, in Rensselaer county, in the building usually called the old bank-place, for the purpose of instructing persons who may choose to apply themselves, in the application of science to the common purposes of life. My principal object is to qualify teachers for instructing the sons and daughters of farmers and mechanics, by lectures or otherwise, in the application of experimental philosophy, and natural history, to agriculture, domestic economy, the arts and manufactures. From the trials, which have been made by persons in my employment at Utica, Whitesborough, Rome, Auburn and Geneva, during the last summer, I am inclined to believe that competent instructors may be produced in the school at Troy, who will be highly useful to community in the diffusion of a very useful kind of knowledge, with its application to the business of living. Apparatus, for the necessary experiments has been so much simplified, and specimens in Natural History have become subjects of such easy attainment, that but a small sum is now required, as an outfit for an instructor, in the proposed branches of science. Consequently, every school district may have the benefit of such a course of instruction, about once in every two or three years, as soon as we can furnish a sufficient number of teachers. I prefer this plan to the endowment of a single public institution, for the resort of those only whose parents are able and willing to send their children from home, or to enter them for several years upon the Fellenberg plan. It seems to comport better with the habits of our citizens and the genius of our government, to place the advantages of useful improvements equally within the reach of all.'

"To give an idea of the course of instruction pursued, I shall extract the first article of the by-laws, passed at a meeting of the President and Board of Trustees, on the 3d of April, 1826, premising that their fundamental principle was not for teachers to lecture to the student, but for each student in succession, to explain by lecture, or demonstrate by experiment, to his teacher and fellow students, the various subjects of study.

"'Article I. The course of exercises, at said school, in fall term shall be, as nearly as circumstances will permit, as follows: Each student shall give five lectures each week on systematic botany, demonstrated with specimens, for the first three weeks; and shall either collect, analyze and preserve specimens of plants or examine the operations of artists and manufacturers, at the school workshops, under the direction of a professor or assistant, who shall explain the scientific principles, upon which such operations depend, four hours on each of the six days in every week; unless excused by a professor on account of the weather, ill health, or other sufficient cause. For the remaining twelve weeks, each student shall give fifteen lectures on mineralogy and zoology, demonstrated with specimens; fifteen lectures on natural philosophy, including astronomy; and fifteen lectures on metalloids, metals, soils, manures, mineral waters and animal and vegetable matter: all to be fully illustrated with experiments, performed with his own hands; and shall examine the operations of artists at the school workshops, under the direction of a professor or assistant, four hours on every Saturday, unless excused as aforesaid.'

"In the first draft of by-laws written by Mr. Van Rensselaer, the 3d clause reads thus: 'That with the consent of the proprietors, a number of well cultivated farms and workshops, in the vicinity of the school, be entered on the record of the school as places of scholastic exercise for students, where the application of the sciences may be most conveniently taught.'

"But in a supplement of by-laws, published in 1827, it appears to me that the trustees have somewhat deviated from the original intention of the founder, and permitted one clause to be printed which, to say the least, may bear the imputation of aristocracy. It is the following: 'Every student quits his studies and enters upon laborious exercise after three o'clock, P. M. daily. But his exercises are not of that kind which requires undignified contortions of the body or those vulgarisms, which, by familiarizing youth with clownish scenes, unfit them for genteel society. They are such as landsurveying, leveling, measuring timber, visiting workshops, making and repairing apparatus in the school-workshop, collecting and analyzing minerals, plants and animals, &c. under the immediate direction of a teacher.'

"Now as these gentlemen have omitted to mention gardening or farming as part of their exercises, I must believe that the use of the spade, plough, &c. require the aforesaid undignified contortions. I know from incontrovertible experience, that the implements can be used without debasing the mind or injuring the manners and in as graceful a manner, at least, as handling a knife and fork. These gentlemen might as well pronounce eating vulgar, as to designate the cultivation of eatables a vulgar occupation, if practised as it ought to be and might be. Mr. Editor, I must say that, if these gentlemen really meant, as I cannot but think they did, to slander useful and necessary labor by the epithet vulgar, they certainly deviate from the original intention of the founder who says that his principal object is 'to qualify teachers for instructing the sons and daughters of farmers and mechanics.' Would it be safe for me, suppose I were a farmer, for instance, to send my child, where he would be taught to despise the occupation of his father? Could I even expect him to learn justice or truth from men who appear to evince want of justice and judgment in thus pronouncing the necessary and honorable occupation of perhaps ninety-nine hundredths of our republicans, to be vulgar and clownish.

"It is possible that my zeal, in this case, may have led me to give the above an interpretation, which the trustees did not intend; but no matter what was the species of labor they designated, the time has arrived when, in the progress of civilization, all good men should see and inculcate this great truth: That labor is not only honorable, but that justice demands of all healthy adults, to aid in the production of those things which they consume; and experience demonstrates that, in doing so, we greatly increase our own chance for health and happiness, without in any way diminishing in the same individuals the opportunity for high cultivation of the intellect as applied to the sciences and fine arts

"To the general system however, I must accord all due praise; and I am pleased to see, by a late newspaper advertisement, that the school is still in successful operation.

"On a plan similar to the Rensselaer school was the Eclectic Institute, established in 1830, at Lexington, and conducted by the Rev. B. O. Peers, Mr. H. H. Eaton and Mr. H. A. Griswold; but since discontinued in consequence of the death of the two latter gentlemen.

"I shall make a few extracts from their prospectus:

"'To facilitate the execution of this plan,' say they "we have a museum connected with the school, occupying a room twenty feet square, whose walls are lined and whose floor is covered with cases, containing specimens illustrative of the sciences of mineralogy, geology, botany, and the various departments of zoology. These the students themselves inspect, handle, and, if necessary, experiment upon.

"'In a contiguous building, another room is furnished as a chemical laboratory, whose apparatus is used, almost exclusively by the students, for the purpose of illustrating their extemporaneous lectures by experiments performed with their own hands.

"'A third room is devoted to subjects connected with natural philosophy, containing the requisite apparatus, the whole of which is intended for the use and is committed to the care of the students of this department.

"'In this way we endeavor, as far as possible, to divest education, in its incipient stages, of abstraction. Everything is demonstrative, practical, experimental. A thirst for knowledge is generated and fostered in our pupils by the gratification of their curiosity and their love of action is indulged by the performance of experiments with their own hands.

* * * * * * *

"In another part of the prospectus, they ask, 'How is interest to be excited! By books? By books alone? And what are books? Pieces of paper fastened together and covered with marks, the arbitary representatives of certain sounds. But there is no awaking influence, no mental aliment in mere unassociated sound. It is only so far as sounds are made the suggesting representatives of things, that books can excite any interest or be of any service, or, in other words, as reading is preceded by observation. This is the starting point, the foundation of all our knowledge, and to neglect this, in the commencement of education, to rely exclusively or even mainly upon books, is to fight against nature. As well may you attempt by description alone, to impart an accurate idea of the world, to a man immured in a dungeon from his infancy."

"Their mode of teaching mathematics is characteristic of the system. 'Practical Mathematics,' say they, 'in its various departments, is taught, on the same principle. The learner takes a compass and chain and goes into the field; and takes the courses and distances of its several sides, then returns and makes a plot of it; and calculates its area: he takes his compass, chain and level, and ascertains the course, the length, the ascent and descent of a road or a river. He makes the proper observations and measures and, from his data, calculates the height and distances of inaccessible or very distant objects. All forms of solid bodies are submitted to his measure and their contents calculated. In short, all is practical. Yet while we insist upon the learner's understanding the practice, we the more strenously persist in the determination, that he shall know the principles on which the practice depends.'

"From this short sketch of the Rensselaerean mode of instruction, I think most persons will admit, that it is a highly judicious system and applicable generally in this country; particularly to youths of somewhat advanced ages, say from twelve to eighteen.

"The system, if its details were equally successfully directed to the Physical Education and Moral Training of the boys, would, in my opinion, be the best yet devised."

The strictures of Mr. Owen upon some part of the system of physical education, I consider just, and fully believe that it was far from the original intention of Mr. Van Rensselaer to neglect farming and gardening. For there are many proofs of his interest in these pursuits and his strong desire to see the application of scientific knowledge increasing the products, and elevating the condition of the farmer. Had a farm been connected with the school from its commencement, and portions of it allotted to the school divisions, I have no doubt but in all cases a sufficient number of the students would have been found, who would faithfully have cultivated the soil, finding in this pursuit, not only healthful exercise, but much pleasure and improvement connected therewith. And had the subject of vegetable physiology and the chemical nature of soils, and their effects upon vegetation been united with this exercise, it would have been equally profitable with the pursuits of the student in the laboratory; and we may say even more directly applicable: for had his attention been rightly directed he would have been prepared ever afterwards, to cultivate, or to give directions for the cultivation of soils to the best possible advantage; and although not directly engaged in this occupation, his knowledge would have been of vast service to those around him.

In a country so pre-eminently agricultural as our own, every one who is liberally educated should know something of the philosophy of vegetation, and the chemical constitution of soils, for this is science, and the more perfect our knowledge of the laws governing, the more certain and higher is the reward of the husbandman.

In regard to the success of the mode of instruction practised in the Rensselaer school, the writer can speak from the experience of five years in that institution as pupil and teacher—believing it to be the most successful method of imparting instruction yet devised, and were the plan so extended as to bring within its scope all the subjects usually taught in our colleges and academies as well as the natural sciences and practical mathematics, I am confident that a student would acquire at least twice the amount of knowledge in the same time that he now usually devotes. The acquirement is not alone the object attained, for when he has obtained knowledge, he can make use of it, for he learns to impart knowledge at the same time that he is acquiring.

The student is made at once a teacher; his recitation is never conducted by question and answer, but it consists of an extemporaneous dissertation or lecture, to the teacher present; and his associate pupils. He has previously studied the subject, with experiments, specimens, books, and the aid of his teacher; he has made it his own as it were, so far as time and means will permit, and in his lecture, he gives his own language to express his ideas and the amount of knowledge he has acquired. The pupil is thus led to feel an interest in the subject, and it at once acquires an importance in his view, which mere study and recitation can never give it. He feels his deficiencies when he is to instruct others, and he is ambitious to supply them.

During the lectures of the pupils, remarks or criticisms of style, manner, and matter, are made by each one present, and at the close of the exercises there is a general assemblage of the students in one room, where the principal teacher, or some assistant, hears the criticisms read, remarking upon them as he thinks proper, taking care always that all is done in the most friendly spirit, and never allowing anything to pass which may wound the feelings of those concerned. At the same time questions are asked and explanations given. After this, the subjects of the following day's study are given out, and the regular exercises of the day are then at an end. The students devote the remainder of the day to out of door exercise, as the collecting of plants, rocks or minerals, to surveying, leveling, &c. and during the term on chemistry, to preparations in the laboratory for the succeeding day's lectures. In the latter subject, each student assists, and the following day gives his lecture, performing every experiment of the lesson with his own hands.

The mornings of each day, for one hour, are devoted to examinations by question and answer upon the subjects of the previous day, and this occasion affords opportunity for much explanation by the teacher.

I should not omit to mention that upon each day's subject, the students first hear a lecture with experiments or demonstrations from the teacher, previous to going on with the same themselves.

In this sketch are presented a few of the principles, very imperfectly, but sufficient to show that the plan of instruction is different from any other of our institutions of learning in the country, and as I believe, a very superior one, for all other subjects as well as those taught there at the present time. If in the establishment for teachers in our academies, this plan were followed, we may rely that the highest success would result, and that the amount of practical knowledge—the knowledge of the constitution and qualities of matter and mind—disseminated, would be far greater than at present.

That we are hastening to this period, seems manifest, and the human mind when once set upon the right course, will go on to a higher and higher knowledge of the external world and of its own powers. A A knowledge of nature and her laws gives man his pre-eminence, and in proportion to the degree of perfection of this knowledge, so is that pre-eminence. It gives him power over nature, and he converts to his own use and benefit that which in ignorance is useless, or evil to him: he is not led astray by false appearances, or representations in regard to subjects around him, and he saves his time, his money, and his repose of mind by the knowledge that nature's laws are unvarying, and that no chance has hid beneath his feet or in the rock by his dwelling, a treasure or a panacea. And finally, he learns from the constitution of created things and

the laws governing them, something of the character of that Being who made "the heavens and the earth," and learns "to look from nature up to nature's God."

BERKSHIRE VALE.

BY EZEKIEL BACON.

Bright land of mountain and of dell!
How thy fair landscapes rise,
And sketch'd by memory's graphic power,
Burst on these fading eyes!

Land of my youth! thy pleasant fields,
In flowery verdure drest,
Where once I hoped, life's journey done,
To lay me down and rest:

For there enshrined in humble hope,
Beneath thy peaceful soil,
A father and a mo her find
Repose from earthly toil:

Thy rushing streams, thy spreading pools,
The well-remembered grove,
Where nature's songsters trilled their notes,
And maidens whispered love:

Thy pastures trod by grazing herds,
Thy meadows' florid pride,
Thy harvests waving in the breeze,
Upon the mountain's side:

Thy swelling hills, thy gentle rills,
Each knoll, and brook, and tree,
Thy greensward dales, thy quiet vales,
Were all most dear to me.

Now, in the musings of the day,
The watches of the night,
The spirit of thy vanished joys
Breaks on the troubled sight.

There stood, where now they stand no more,
The old paternal halls:
The stranger's hand has entered there,
And razed its ancient walls.

There dwelt the objects of my love,
The hopes of better days,
Before my weary feet had trod,
Life's devious, thorny ways.

There rest the visions of the past,
The friends of other years;
I scarce should know thy altered face
Seen through this mist of tears.

Sweet, smiling land! *that altered face*
I would not—could not view;
To me 'twere but *thy lifeless form:*
Adieu, dear land—adieu!

Utica, April, 1842.

[For the Northern Light.]

EFFECTS OF MENTAL CULTIVATION.

BY GEO. R. FAIRBANKS.

A CULTIVATION of his mental powers opens to the mind of man a new existence, and introduces him, as it were, to a higher sphere of thought and being. He is no longer the almost brute, the toiling, working slave, the minion of power, the dray-horse of a mere existence; but he learns that there is implanted within him a soul, a consciousness of a higher nature; and he feels that life presents to him other cares and duties than the mere gratification of animal wants, or the breathing respite of labor; little by little the sphere of his mental vision is enlarged, and viewing the heavens, the earth and the world around him, his mind grasps some conception of the sublimity and grandeur of the creative power, and his own elevation, in being able to behold and admire the operation of the laws which govern the universe. To him, the blue arch above opens a book of revelation, a wondrous exhibition of power; he feels connected, by some mysterious influence, with the stars above him, and gazes into the heavens, his mind thronging with new sensations of wonder and astonishment. He sees the worlds beyond, the tiny, twinkling stars; perhaps the central orbs of new systems of worlds, and views in all the wonders of the universe, the potency of that Almighty power, which has created and sustains so stupenduous a system. He looks into the depths of the earth, and finds new sources of interest there. The discoveries of the chemist furnish new aliment to his mind, in viewing the wondrous adaptation of the world to the uses of its inhabitants. The crystal formed in some lone cavern, fashioned with a precision and nicety, unattainable by human art; the coral reef beneath the dark blue wave; the pearl in its lowest depths; all open to him food for thought and reflection.

Nature, to him, is full of speaking wonder and beauty; the flower that blooms in the sequestered vale; the purling stream, which bubbles along the green meadow side, in dancing brightness; the rich green foliage of the overhanging trees; the clustering vine, that hangs in graceful festoons from its branches, fill his path with delight, and send a thrill of pleasure to his heart.

The earth, the air, the sky, afford to him an exhaustless mine of beauty; nothing passes him by unheeded; and refreshed by the contemplation of the world around and above him, he can contemplate nature with a delight and pleasure, which only he can know who has had his perception of beauty and grandeur enkindled by the influences of mental cultivation.

It is true, that these objects are not spread out for him alone; that the most ignorant and unlettered may gaze as freely, and look upon them as often; that the ears of the savage may equally well drink in the sounds of harmony, and note the melodies of creation; but to the one nature speaks in intelligible language, and every voice she utters strikes a congenial chord in his bosom:

"For him the spring
Distils her dews, and from the silken germ
Its lucid leaves unfolds; for him the hand
Of autumn tinges every fertile branch
With blooming gold, and blushes like the morn.
Each passing hour sheds tribute from her wings;
And still new beauties meet his lonely walk.
Not a breeze
Flies o'er the meadow; not a cloud imbibes
The setting sun's effulgence; not a strain
From all the tenants of the warbling shade,
But whence his bosom can partake
Fresh pleasure."

But to the mind of the unlettered man, these objects bring home no images of beauty or pleasure. To him, the sky above brings no other thought, perhaps, than as its bright warm sunshine may enable him to bask in its rays, or ripen his harvest. The flower that blooms at his feet, is to him a useless thing; the bubbling stream possesses no beauty, but that it may quench the thirst of his kine, or the cataract, bounding from the crag, unless it turn a water-wheel. The stately pine, reaching up to heaven, and the sturdy oak, in its strength and majesty, bring him no thought, save their pecuniary value.

Nature may spread around him her choicest gifts, but he passes them heedlessly by. How complete is the poet's picture of him of whom he says,

"A primrose by the river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And nothing more."

He, whose heart has been imbued with the liberalising and enlarging effects of mental culture, becomes a citizen of the world; the boundaries of time, in which his own existence, circumscribed, melt away, and he becomes one of the past, and walks amid the palaces of Imperial Rome, as it were, within the sound of the voices of a Brutus or a Gracchus. He hears in the deserted senate chamber, the rustling of the senatorial robes, and looks down from the Aventine upon the triumphal procession, a Pompey or a Cæsar.

He becomes a denizen of all nations and all climes, and follows the record of their rise and progress; with an equal interest to that with which he regards the events transpiring around him; with him the past and the present mingle; with him the world is a unity; he recognizes time only in its two great divisions, the past and the future. He divests himself of that selfish patriotism, which confines itself to the city, the state or the nation of his birth, and becomes a citizen of the world; not that his heart is weaned from his own, his native land, for still he cherishes the *amor patriæ* with a purer and more reflecting spirit, a deep and more abiding patriotism; but he recognizes the ties which bind man to man; the Greek, the Æthiop, or the Turk; he looks back to the fountain-head, and recognizes their common origin, and exercises a more comprehensive, liberal and extended view of the relations which exist between men. He feels not that narrow nationality, which encloses men, as it were, with a wall, and transmits the bitter blood of one age to another, and makes the landmark, the stream or the ocean a cause of enmity and hatred, but claims a kindred to merit wherever it shall have had birth. He brings himself before the sightlessness of a Milton, and hears, with pitying heart, the blind poet send forth the treasures of that mind, to which millions have united to do homage; he beholds a Newton, deep in the mysteries of nature, and striking out the great laws of the world's being; he weeps over the tomb of the mysterious prophet of German romance; he views with interest the villa where Petrarch lived, and sang his Laura's praise; he gazes into the lake of Constance, and recalls the splendid intellects which have sought its seclusion; traces the devious progress and misfortunes of a Dante; and dwelleth with the poets and orators of Imperial Rome, and saith, all these are my countrymen.

He claims fellowship with his brother man in all his trials and struggles; his heart thrills with emotion over the grave of the martyred Emmet; he mingles in the struggles of the Greek to free his native land, and feels the indignant blood coursing through his veins, as the last wail of distress is heard mingling with the death cry of the unfortunate Pole.

And these influences, moreover, are essentially democratic, and tend to the utmost freedom. Although the continued and too severe pressure of tyranny will rouse the spirit of resistance in the uneducated man's bosom, and the too strongly bent bow will snap the cords which hold it; although man, in the extremity of crushing evil and misery, will rise and shake from him his chains, yet such are rather the ebullitions of passion, the aimless throbbings and convulsions of the fettered spirit, the workings of man's physical nature, than the mature, the firm and undaunted opposition to wrong, which nerves the heart of the intellectual man. The unenlightened mass break madly forth from their bondage to revenge, ravage and destroy, and entail upon themselves evils a thousand times more severe than those from which they attempted to escape. But upon an enlightened and free people, tyranny can never forge its chains.

The injured spirit sleepeth not,
It may not be confined,
For tyrant's hand hath never wrought
A fetter for the mind."

The very breathings of the soul are the whisperings of freedom. Freedom of thought, and word, and being are closely united, and to the mind are one. With it the great principles of man's existence, his end and being are incorporated: that the few shall not govern the many; that the mass shall not toil for the aggrandizement of the few.

The mind sees in its own empire no distinction, except in capacity. It sees that God hath granted to all his creatures minds capable of improvement; that in mind there are no privileged classes; that the humblest are equal to the proudest; that the laborer at the anvil can look up at the sky above him, and read the glories of a creation there, as well as the king upon his throne.

In the general diffusion of knowledge lies the only safe-guard for the liberties of a people. The insidious approaches of tyranny, the gradual creeping on of the coils of slavery, can only be guarded against by the watchful care and supervision of enlightened mind; not to the few, but to the many. The wily arts of the demagogue, and the specious friendship of the intriguing aspirant for power, may only be met and foiled by the close scanning eye of cultivated intellect.

Nor is the effect of literature on the mind to foster pride, or engender exclusiveness, as has been sometimes urged. Such are only the results of that superficial gathering of knowledge, which self-satisfied, with its slender attainments, is exclusive in its own ignorance and folly, not having dipped sufficiently deep into the well-springs of knowledge to have discovered their own deficiencies. With such minds, the really enlightened and educated own no consanguinity.

The history of the world has shown that literary men have never been on the side of tyranny and oppression; but have ever thrown the weight of their exertions and their influence with the poor and downtrodden; and have ever been the firmest friends and most unflinching advocates of the rights of the mass. Their sympathies and feelings have been, not with the proud or the rich; but with the deserving and the virtuous.

Pride of birth, wealth or temporal honors avail nought to them. Accustomed as they are to look only at the intellectual and moral qualities of man, despising the conventional ranks and baubles of artificial society, they contemplate man only in the relation in which he stands to his Creator.

[For the Northern Light.]

THE NORTHERN PINE.

BY FREDERICK W. COLE.

I.

When the mournful wail of the autumn gale
Was heard in the pathless wood,
And its golden pride o'er the hill's strewn wide,
Fell around me where I stood—
The same strong hand that so harsh could seize
And wring such woe from the leafless trees,
Brought tones as soft as the zephyr breeze
From a harp of a happier mood.

II.

'Twas the brave Old Pine that disdained to whine
For the loss of the summer sheen—
Through the sultry heat and the driving sleet
He can keep his tranquil mein.
The winter may come, it will not alloy
His dreamy song of contented joy,
And he smiles at the frost that can never destroy
His robe of perennial green.

III.

Unblenching Pine! be thy courage mine
In the whirl of a changing time,
That the chilling breath of approaching death
On my heart strings soft may chime.
Let my springs be not in an earthly clod
By the step of the dark despoiler trod,
But by holy trust may I dwell with God
In his pure and changeless clime.

Albany, May, 1842.

[For the Northern Light.]

THE FRONTIER SETTLERS OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY P. H. AGAN.

MUCH has been said and written relative to this class of American citizens. Their character, practices, and habits of life, have formed a theme of praise or censure by all; but of none more than by the crafty, subtle and scheming politician, who, governed by motives of ambition and personal aggrandizement, has for years past, used every exertion in his power, to secure their friendship and their suffrages, to elevate him to a seat in the legislature, congress, or perhaps the presidential chair. On the other hand, his interests have been sacrificed, his character traduced, his motives impugned, his hopes for the future blasted, to minister to the same craving appetite. The character and habits of life of the western settler, have also, formed the subject matter of many pages of the books of foreign travellers, who come here with the predetermination to condemn all they see and hear; but their opinions are unworthy to be treasured up by an American citizen. Their books are made to sell, and the one that abuses the people of this country and its institutions the most, will be the more readily purchased in England.

But whatever may be said, as to the merits or demerits of the frontier settler, he should be regarded as standing at least upon an equal footing with the most meritorious class of our citizens. He suffers in common with his fellow men all the ills and cares of life; besides, his occupation subjects him to ceaseless toil, to provide himself with the necessary means of subsistence. The stately forest melts away before the power of his arm, and the wilderness which before had been the residence of the wild beast and the savage, is made to resound with the busy hum of industry. He prepares the pathway for civilization and refinement. The beautiful and pleasant village, the abode of contentment and happiness, and the busy bustling city, with its splendid mansions, the evidences of luxury and wealth, follow in his footsteps. His total disregard of danger, serves as the bulwark of defence to the denser settlements of the country. Often the first intimation he has of war, is the spectacle of his own home enveloped in the flames. The horrid demoniac yell of the savage goaded on by some imaginary wrong and impatient for the blood of his victim, is first heard around his defenceless habitation. Who that lives secure in the enjoyment of prosperity, and surrounded by every comfort whiche an render life desirable, can contemplate with feelings of indifference, the scenes of toil, hardship and danger, to which the settlers of this country have been exposed from its first discovery, down even to the present day? Who can listen to the story of their sufferings and wrongs and not be thankful that he at least, has had the good fortune to escape them—that his lot has been cast in a better land?

The settlers upon the western borders of the United States, are generally composed of men who are comparatively poor, or possessed of means sufficient to purchase of the government a wilderness farm. Driven from the eastern country by competition and the high price of land, the emigrant goes to the west to purchase for his own benefit, and the benefit of his children. The deep and absorbing interest which he feels in their welfare prompts him to do this. For this he seeks a wilderness home, far from the comforts, advantages and blessings which are attendant upon a high state of civilization and refinement. It is sufficient excuse for him, that the future welfare of his children is his motive. He well knows that by this step he is sacrificing in some degree his own comfort; but nevertheless, he does not swerve from his duty, for by doing it he is aware that he is contibuting to their future happiness; and should not this be his darling object—the grand consummation of his earthly hopes?

But why should he be abused and condemned, and regarded by the foreigner, as little better in point of intelligence, and possessed of scarcely more of the feelings of humanity, than the red man of the forest? and why indeed should these sentiments be expressed by intelligent Americans? It cannot proceed from friendly or disinterested motives. His manners, it is true, are rough and forbidding when not improved by education, and is it not so with every class in the same condition? But he should not, and would not be condemned, if his circumstances, privileges, and means to obtain information were properly considered. It should be remembered that he lives upon the confines of civilization—that the advatages which are enjoyed by his more fortunate countrymen in the east, are not placed within his reach—that the common school is to him a stranger—that the lecture stand is not set up, to diffuse the lights of knowledge and science amongst the people. It is not to be expected under such unfavorable circumstances, that he will exhibit the same degree of intelligence as those who enjoy continually these means for the improvement of theirminds.

Although there are hardhips attendant upon a life at the west, there other inducements than have been stated, which go far to do away with the objections which are, or which may be raised against a residence in that country. It is well worthy of remark, that those who occupy the highest seats of public trust, emigrated there in their younger days. They went out into the wilderness, full of hope and joyous anticipations—periled their health and life in the settlement of the country, and are now enjoying the rich reward which is laid up in store for every one who seeks and merits it. The emigrant sees in the workings of the noble institutions of his country, that merit receives its just reward. He knows that if he possesses honesty, virtue and intelligence, that he is sure to gain it—that he who lives in his "log ribbed cabin," may become the future legislator of his country—that the treasure is placed equally within the reach of the poor emigrant, and the one who counts his millions. This he realizes and understands, and although he sees before him long years of labor, exertion and toil, he is contented and happy.

Liverpool, May, 1842.

[For the Northern Light.]

MY UNCLE JOHN.

BY MARION D. SULLIVAN.

My good uncle John was a gentleman;
He'd sailed in a frigate, 'tis true;
And still he loved the ocean wild,
And wore the deep naval blue.

My uncle John was the kindest of men;
The poor widow knew that before—
She came but to borrow an armful of wood,
And he sent a whole load to her door.

My uncle John had a paroquet,
Which he brought from a tropical shore,
And every morning, when day-light broke,
She came flying up to his door,
Calling out, "Uncle John! wake up, uncle John!"

When the deep bell tolled from the village spire,
My good uncle John was there,
Pacing slowly up through the old broad aisle,
With a quiet and serious air.

Oh, who in this world can be just and pure,
His garments in sanctity keeping?
My good uncle John was a jewel of men,
But in church, he was constantly sleeping.

He waked to chaunt, and to cry "amen,"
In tones sonorous and deep;
But the sermon—alas, for the frailty of men!
It put him the faster to sleep.

One hot Sunday morning in sermon time,
My uncle so soundly was sleeping,
When a shrill voice came from beneath the desk,
Where Poll her vigil was keeping,
Calling out, "Uncle John! wake up, uncle John!"

Then the queer little parrot flew up in sight;
A mischievous neighbor had brought her;
And again she repeated, so loud and clear,
The lesson her master had taught her:
"Uncle John! wake up, uncle John!"

My poor old uncle, he woke at once;
Trembling and blushing so deep;
And never again was it said of him,
That a good sermon put him to sleep.

Parkersburgh, Va., 1842.

[For the Northern Light.]

COMETS.—CHAPTER III.

BY R. W. HASKINS, A. M.
Author of "Astronomy for Schools."

[Concluded from page 31.]

THE physical constitution of comets is a branch of astronomy which is not far advanced. We spoke in our last, but only in the way of definition, of the envelope, the nucleus and the tail of comets: we have now farther to consider each of these several parts. But first, as we have said that some of these parts are sometimes wanting, it may be proper for us clearly to define that modern astronomers do not class among the number of essentially distinctive characteristics of comets, either the envelope or the tail. According to them, any heavenly body is a comet which has a motion of its own, and passes around the sun in an ellipse of so great eccentricity that it ceases to be visible from the earth, during some part of its revolution.

Telescopic investigations of comets have somewhat instructed us in regard to the nature of these several parts of which we have spoken. Many comets have no apparent tail; and some few are without discernible nucleus; but none are believed to have been well observed which had not that peculiar species of smoky or foggy atmosphere, which astronomers designate envelope.

The matter composing this envelope is so rare, and transparent, that the most feeble light is not obstructed by it; and consequently the smallest stars may at all times be seen through this part of the comet. In such comets as have nucleuses, those parts of the envelope which are nearest to it are usually rare, very transparent, and reflect but little light. But, at some distance from the nucleus, the envelope becomes much more luminous, so as to resemble a kind of bright ring, surrounding the central part of the comet. Sometimes two or three of these rings are visible, one within the other, and having dark spaces between them. When the comet has a tail, this appendage appears to be constituted of parts of the ring which, in that case, is open on one side, and the ends, as it were, seem prolonged, so as to form the tail. Some of these apparent rings are of vast dimensions; that which pertained to the great comet of 1811, for instance, being ten thousand leagues in thickness, and the distance at which it was maintained from the nucleus was computed at no less than twelve thousand leagues. The comet of 1790, and that of 1807, had each two rings, one of which was of even greater dimensions than this.

We have said there are comets without apparent or distinguishable nucleus. Such, we cannot doubt, are mere masses of gaseous matter, without solid parts, which nevertheless obey the laws of gravity, and traverse regular orbits. But most comets exhibit a nucleus, more or less distinct; and these often resemble a planet, both in form and brilliancy. Usually this is very small; but such is not always the case, some of them having exceeded the size of the least of the planets. The following are the diameters of the nucleuses of several comets:—

Comet of 1798,.....	26	miles,
" " 1805,.....	29	"
" " 1799,.....	373	"
" " 1807,.....	537	"
" " 1811,.....	2,617	"

Halley's comet, on its return to the sun, in October, 1835, exhibited a very distinct and well defined nucleus, at least upon one occasion, which approached the apparent size of Jupiter.* Some of these nucleuses, and even those of very small comets, are known to entirely eclipse stars, when passing before them; and hence they are proved to be bodies sufficiently solid, at least, to intercept the rays of light, in their passage from the fixed stars to the earth. But it does not appear certain that all these are thus solid, but rather that some may not be so; yet the great variety in the general appearance, no less than in the brightness of these bodies, is sufficient to justify great latitude of opinion, upon such points as those on which we yet lack absolute demonstration. "Those who, since the observations of the last forty years, can believe that all comets are formed upon one model, need only examine the archieve of science to perceive how little such an idea is founded upon fact." There are a number of instances recorded of the observance of comets in daylight, which certainly implies a brightness, in this class of celestial bodies, to which we have not, in our days, been accustomed. Among those thus distinguished, by historians, are the following: the comet of the year 43 before Christ; that of the year 1402 of our era; the one of 1532; and that of 1744; all bodies that were previously known; and the still more remarkable fact of the one of 1577, namely, that it was actually discovered by the astronomer Tycho-Brahe, during daylight, and without any previous knowledge by which he might have been guided. The greater or less intenseness of light in these bodies, or rather of their nucleuses, we must not forget is, in a great degree, controlled by the greater or less transparency of the envelopes, by which they are at all times surrounded, and through which they shed their enfeebled light, as our lamps do theirs, through the ground glass shades that we employ to soften their rays.

As to the tails of comets, science possesses very little that is certain respecting them. That they are sometimes of prodigious length we know, by admeasurement, but what causes the matter composing them to assume this shape and position is not so easily determined. The comet of 1680, for instance, had a tail of ninety-six millions of miles in length; that of 1769, had one exceeding thirty-eight millions of miles; and the one of 1744, had, for two days, no less than six tails, spread out like a fan, and each measuring seven millions of miles in length!

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* See "Astronomy for Schools," page 197.

There is a wide spread and popular error in regard to the direction in which these tails tend, from the head of the comet, which it is difficult to correct, because all the first names known in astronomy may be, and indeed, constantly are quoted in its support. It is this, namely, that the tail of a comet is always directly behind the comet, as seen from the sun. Now, nothing can be wider from the fact than this statement; and yet it is hard to conceive of a proposition that is more easily disproved by direct observation. Still it has received the positive sanction, as before observed, of the first names in astronomy. Fracaster and Apian were the first to assume that position, which they did as early as 1531; and Newton, Bailey, Delambre, Laplace, Brewster, and the younger Herschel are among those who have since given to the error in question, the unhesitating support of their distinguished names.* The truth is, there is no uniform direction to these cometary appendages, some of them extending from the sun, others directly towards that body, and others, still, at various angles to these. In some instances, too, it has happened that the same comet has exhibited two or more of these tails at the same time, and these pointing in different directions. We have already mentioned the comet of 1744, which had six tails at one time, diverging from each other, and having spaces of about 4° broad between them. The comet of 1824 is another instance. This body had two tails, one of which was opposite the sun, and the other was projected directly towards that luminary—both extending upon a line passing through the centre of the comet. But, when we inquire what are these tails of comets? how are they produced? what are the causes which so constantly modify and change their forms? what are those which control the formation of the envelope, and of the concentric rings, which sometimes surround the nucleus? The answer is, that none of these questions has ever yet been resolved, in a satisfactory manner. True, there is no lack of theories upon these several points; but why should we waste time upon these? A theory, says Voltaire, is a mouse: it had passed through nine holes—a tenth stopped it. Many of the theories upon our subject were stopped long ere they reached the ninth hole; and others only require a slight examination to subject them to an arrest equally prompt and effectual.

But, if we are unable to account for and explain the phenomena which the ever varying forms and appearances of comets present, we may profit by a knowledge of them. Unfortunately our data upon these points, are far from being as perfect as we could wish, or as the wants of science require. As previously observed, only three comets, of all that numerous class of bodies, are thus far known as regular, returning visiters to us, and but one of these is of magnitude sufficient to be consulted, at least upon some points, with much hope of success. This one is Halley's, or the comet of seventy-six years. The last return of this body to the sun, took place in 1835. It was then favorably situated for observations, and was a long time visible. Of course the occasion thus offered for its examination was improved to the utmost; and probably no comet ever before had so great a number of telescopes pointed at it, from all parts of the civilized world. The result of all this optical inquiry has been the disclosure of numerous appearances and changes in this comet that have never been witnessed in any other of the cometary family; and while they all remain, as at present, unexplained, they very naturally must create diversified conjectures respecting both their natures and their producing causes; and at the same time raise, as they have, the question whether all, or any of these are to be considered as pertaining, alike, to all comets, or whether they are peculiarities belonging alone to the comet of Halley.

In calling attention to some of these, we will first notice the formation of additional tails, or streams of light, which Halley's comet, at its last appearance exhibited. These were seen, both in Europe and America, and excited no little interest among the astronomers of both. As early as the 21st of September, 1835, Prof. Loomis, then at New-Haven, saw, upon the side of the comet next the sun, a larger portion of the envelope than was to be seen in any other part. Whether this had any connection with the subsequent development of additional tails it is impossible to determine; but, be that as it may, this phenomenon was followed in the ensuing month, by such development, which was noted in both hemispheres. Prof. Joslin, at Union College, on the 12th of October, first discovered an additional tail to the comet, making an angle of about 120° with the long tail; and the opposite sides being inclined at an angle of about 20°. This was often seen upon subsequent nights, and was observed to have often changed its size, shape, brightness and position. It did not appear, says Prof. Joslin, to be a tail to the outward envelope, as we have already stated the usual tails of comets do, but it was a tail to the nucleus.

In the continental observatories of Europe, where the first talent and the most perfect instruments are found, all the appearances of this comet were most rigidly scrutinized; and the result of these labors was presented to the world from the pen of Mons. Arago, in the *Annuaire* of the Bureau of Longitude of France. Many of the essential features of that paper follow.

During the last apparition of Halley's comet, says our author, that body experienced physical changes equally remarkable for their extent, and for the suddenness of their occurrence.

On the 15th of October, 1835, the great teslescope of the observatory of Paris, supplied with a high magnifying power, disclosed, in the circular nebulosity, little south of the point directly opposite the tail, a sector, or brush of light, comprised between two apparently right lines, directed towards the centre of the nucleus. The light of this sector much surpassed that of all other parts of the envelope. Its limits were well defined. The next day, the 16th, after sunset, it was discovered that the sector of the 15th had disappeared; but, upon another part of the envelope, to the north, this time, of the point opposite the axis of the tail, a new sector had been formed. We could not hesitate to give it this name on account of the place it occupied, of its truly extraordinary light, the perfectly defined lines which constituted its borders, and its great angular opening, which surpassed 90°.

On the 17th, this sector was still visible, its form and direction not materially changed, but its light was much less vivid. On the 18th, the same, only that the light was still less intense. The nights of the 19th and 20th were overcast; and on the 21st there were no less than three of these luminous sectors, distinctly visible, within the envelope of the comet. The one which had the least angular opening, and whose light was the least vivid, was situated in prolongation of the tail of the comet.

Within the ensuing forty-eight hours great changes took place in the comet. On the 23rd, there only remained the scarcely perceptible traces of these sectors, and the comet had totally changed its aspect. The nucleus, hitherto so brilliant, so distinct and well defined, had become so broad and diffused, that the observers could not believe in the reality of so sudden and so vast a change, until after having assured themselves, by examination, that these appearances were not caused by the accumulation of moisture upon the glasses of the telescopes. On the same night it was observed that the eastern portion of the envelope, although not more extended than the opposite region, very greatly surpassed this last, in brightness.

These several strange and inexplicable appearances were observed by a German astronomer, also, who noticed, in addition, several other particulars. One of these was especially worthy of consideration. It was that, while the envelope, in all other parts, presented a figure generally round, yet, on the side next the sun there was a local, and perfectly distinct depression of this envelope! At Florence, on the 15th of October, there were seen no less than six very vivid luminous sectors, in the envelope of this comet, all diverging from the nucleus, and extending to various distances; and yet, so sudden was the change, that subsequently these were no where to be seen.

During the same appearance of this comet, it was carefully observed, at the Cape of Good Hope, by the younger Herschel, after its perihelion passage. This astronomer says of it then, that its physical aspect was entirely changed. For a long time it had no tail. The parabolic envelope of the head was formed under his very eye, as it were, with so great rapidity that its visible volume, which was well defined, was more than doubled in the space of twenty-four hours, computing from the morning of the 26th of January, 1836. On this occasion, in repeating after an interval of three hours, the micrometic observations of the well defined parts that it had when he commenced, he found an augmentation of their linear dimensions amounting to one-sixteenth of their entire size! This extraordinary dilation continued until the parabaloid became so great, and of so feeble a light as finally to disappear entirely, leaving only the nucleus and tail visible. Another and very singular particular, was the existence of a very small interior comet, having a head and tail complete; its nucleus being that of the general mass. This dilated less rapidly than the envelope. Before observations ceased the tail itself, became invisible.

These singular changes of form, in this comet, add new complications to a problem which, in itself, was always sufficiently difficult. If we would attempt to explain them, we must not forget that these luminous sectors, so suddenly destroyed, and again renewed in so short periods of time, were not less than two hundred thousand leagues in length!

We have before observed that these changes, in Halley's comet, had given rise to the question, whether they pertain to the nature of comets, in general, or whether they are peculiar to this one only? Of the comet of 1682, (which has since been found to have been a former appearance of Halley's,) La Hire says that, on the 25th of August, that year, the nucleus resembled a star of the second magnitude; on the 11th of the ensuing month this could scarcely be distinguished, so much had it become diffused, within that short period. When this same body was visible in 1835, as already stated, we saw an exceedingly distinct and well defined nucleus, on the evening of the 21st of October, but no vestige of a defined nucleus was visible, in our telescope, twenty-four hours afterwards; nor did we ever, either before or after that occasion, detect such nucleus, although we made a great number of observations of the body in question. But these facts, however important for future use, can determine nothing, in the present state of our knowledge.

Almost all astronomers have been accustomed to teach and to believe that the comet of Halley was diminishing, and that at each return it gave evidence of this; while not a few had extended this doctrine to the whole family of comets. From this circumstance much interest was felt, by astronomers, upon the last return of this body, to determine its light, length of tail, diameter of envelope, &c.; and all these, when ascertained, clearly disproved the conjectures respecting diminution; and well established, for this comet, at least, an apparent undiminished mass.

There was no lack of testimony in favor of sudden and apparently capricious changes, in comets, before the last appearance of Halley's in 1835. Kepler had recorded that the tail of the comet of 1607, from being very short, become one of great length, "in the twinkling of an eye." Vandelin, Snellis, and Cysal, all declared they had seen, upon the borders of the tail of the comet of 1618, an undulatory motion, as if it were agitated by the wind; and Heveleus noted similar appearances in the comets of 1652 and 1661. Pingré, also, states that he saw, in the very long tail of the comet of 1769, undulations resembling those of the aurora borealis; and to show his confidence in this, he says that certain stars appeared alternately within and without the limits of this tail. But, all these appearances, as they were observed but in one place at a time, have been supposed, by astronomers, to have been optical illusions, caused by atmospherical clouds, fogs, or other imperfect obstructions to the free passage of feeble light, and they were uniformily treated as such, until the observations of Halley's comet, in 1835–6. But the singular changes and appearances of this body having been noted upon both continents, and in both the northern and southern hemispheres, by various observers, and upon different occasions, there was no longer room to doubt their truth, and therefore they are now not only well accredited as being what they seemed, but they have furnished strong presumptive evidence of the truth and accuracy of the more ancient observations of Kepler and others, which have been so long considered and treated as apocryphal. Arago, to whom the scientific world is so much indebted, holds, upon this subject, the following sentiments:

"For my part," says he, "I avow that, upon this point of theory, I have hitherto been disposed to adopt the common opinion; but the phenomena which Halley's comet exhibited, during its last apparition, have rendered me more circumspect. To speak more plainly, I now no longer regard it as impossible that there should be manifested in the nucleus of a comet, in the whole or any part of its envelope, or its tail, very sudden changes of intensity. Without reference to the successive appearance and disappearance of the luminous sectors, before described, I may say, in support of my present views, that, on the 18th of November, the sky being of the greatest serenity, the tail of the comet seemed but little more than half the length which I had found it on the 16th, under less favorable atmospherical circumstances; and that the entire comet, as a whole, when thus compared, had materially diminished in brilliancy. And yet, in this interval, the comet had been constantly approaching the sun, and hence, according to previously received opinions, far from diminishing, it should have been constantly augmenting in brightness! When the cause of a phenomenon is so little understand that it is developed in a manner directly in opposition to our expectations and our theories, it

* For a more detailed examination of this curious subject, and the proofs of the position here assumed, see "Astronomy for Schools," chapter on comets; and also Appendix, p. 298–9, and 305–6.

would be worse than folly to attempt a solution of the enigma."

[For the Northern Light.]

THE PAST AND THE PRESENT.

LIKE Minerva, springing in full armor from the head of Jupiter, the present comes forth from the past, possessed of the experience and wisdom of centuries. The past has furnished an immense capital—the acquisitions of all its politicians and philosophers—the results of its experience during thousands of years; a capital by which, if rightly employed, the present may amass incalculable wealth. The past was a seed containing a germ—the present, that germ, which has shot forth, spread its branches, and become a giant tree. Each successive generation, like the yearly expansion of the tree, building and enlarging upon its former growth, has added, by continued progressions, to what was previously acquired.

Such is the present; the heir to the acquisitions of the past, its pupil taught invaluable lessons in moral, political and scientific wisdom. With such relations, the present is under high obligations to the past.

It is indebted to it for all that Discovery has brought to light. Astronomy has rendered important services to navigation—has dissipated the alarms occasioned by extraordinary celestial phenomena, and dispelled the errors springing from ignorance of our true relation to nature. Mineralogy has made known to us the uses of the metals; we have coined money, have fabricated the implements of the husbandman, the tools of the mechanic, the utensils of the housewife. Steam has assisted us in almost every department of industry, has almost done away with labor, has annihilated space, and accomplished the most giant-like undertakings. For all this we are indebted to the past.

The present is indebted to the past for all that Invention, the twin sister of Discovery, has produced. It has produced the mariner's compass; and the once timid sailor no longer coasts along the shore, no longer conceives the narrow limits of his own continent to be the boundaries of the earth: he daringly launches forth, he discovers new continents; and all that commerce has achieved for the civilization of man, for the extension of light and liberty, is the result.

It has produced the art of printing, and a wide diffusion of books, and the dissemination of general intelligence has followed: an art which has elevated man in the scale of being; an art which, more than any thing else, has tended to equalize the condition of men, placing the perseverance of the poor, and the riches of the wealthy in the same scale.

It has produced a thousand conveniences of life. We receive from its hands the pen and the steam engine. All these are the legacies of the past.

We owe it to the past that we have some settled principles of government. It would almost seem as though kings have had their "entrances and their exits," that kingdoms have risen and fallen, that wars and revolutions have destroyed their thousands, to demonstrate the true mode of government. Despotism has been gradually losing its power, while civil liberty has advanced; man has been regaining his rights, and learning, under proper restrictions, to govern himself. Our republic and the monarchy of England have been thousands of years in erecting—kings from David down, through a long succession, their artists, and the governments, which have successively existed, their studies preparatory to these their great designs.

The present is indebted to the past for a school of refined literature—of highly perfected art. It not only invented letters and constructed a written language, but has presented us with a noble study in the productions of Homer, and Cicero, and Horace—of Shakspeare and Milton. In painting, it has given us as models the canvass of Guido and Raphael; in sculpture, the creations of Phidias and Michael Angelo.

As Americans, we are under peculiar obligations to the past. Our free institutions are the gift of those who left kindred and home, dared the perils of the deep and the privations of the wilderness, to rest here the ark of liberty; who subdued the forest, and planted here a tree whose leaves are for the healing of nations; who achieved for us the glorious revolution; who framed for us our noble constitution, and by the wisdom of their measures insured to us prosperity and happiness. To these we are under lasting obligation; "we owe it to these to hand down the record of their glorious deeds to posterity—to transmit to them an inheritance untarnished, that we may say to them, 'if we did not amass, we have not squandered your inheritance of glory.'"

Yale, 1842. GUITELL. * * *

General Intelligence.

[For the Northern Light.]

BERKSHIRE COUNTY—HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL.

BY WM. BACON.

THE geological and mineralogical features of Berkshire, are of a most interesting character. Her mountains, which rank among the highest of the state, and claim an existence with the primitive ages of time, exhibit a variety of formation which may well invite the amateur of nature in her simplicity and majesty to their towering summits; while her valleys, rich in earth's mighty resources, hold out the most captivating inducements to wander in the plains below.

The general formation of the Taghkanic range, is talcose slate, or as Prof. Hitchcock has it, micaceo-talcose slate. There are many interesting specimens of it found in almost any portion of the range, through the whole extent. The general strike or course of it, according to Prof. H., is north and south, varying at Boston corner, in the south-west part of the county, a little east of north, and in Lanesboro' to north 30° east. Its dip varies from 50° to 90°. The soil produced by its disintegration, is warm, and highly valuable for all agricultural purposes. Saddle mountain, in Williamstown, is also characterized for having its full quota of this material, where its strike varies more to a north-easterly and south-westerly direction, with a dip varying from 30° to 90°. In the Hoosic range it occupies an elevated portion of the strata, which, in passing southerly, becomes narrower to its apparent termination in the south part of Becket. Steatite or soap stone is found associated with this range in Zoar and Windsor. There are, also, beds of steatite in Hinsdale, Cheshire, Savoy and Windsor, in gneiss. In Zoar, the talcose slate and steatite are interstratified with mica slate and serpentine. Lenox mountain is a beautiful specimen (a large one, to be sure, and fit only for nature's cabinet,) of mica slate, In many instances, it is of a dazzling silver lustre, and so laminated as to be easily separated. Its course, by Prof. Hitchcock, is put down at N. 10° E. with an easterly dip of nearly 90°. On some of the elevated points, it appears to project into the earth perpendicularly, and its lamina exhibits curves which would be apt to inspire strange surmises of the workings of nature. The soil, formed of mica, is superior though in this region perhaps not better than that from the micaceo-talcose slate. In Florida, at the north part of the county, commences a range of gneiss, which here exhibits a very narrow exposure at the surface, but widening towards the south, and running through the towns of Windsor, Peru, Hinsdale, Washington, Becket, Tyringham, Otis, Sandisfield and New Marlboro, to the Connecticut line. In this formation, steatite and serpentine are found in Windsor, quartz rock in Tyringham, and plumbago in the east part of Washington. A stratum of quartz rock is also found extending north along the eastern line of Sheffield and Barrington into Stockbridge and Lee. But the mineral wealth of Berkshire is found in her vallies, in her valuable limestone ledges, and her rich iron mines. The lime and marble of Berkshire extend through its whole length, and occupy prominent parts of every valley. Its general course is north with a slight variation east, and south a few degrees west. Its dip is uniformly to the east, varying from 20° to 90°. It runs into several varieties in different parts of the county, and presents a variety of colors which, in some hues, must meet the taste of the most fastidious. Magnesian limestone, or dolomite, is found in New-Marlborough, Sheffield and Lee; Micaceous limestone, in Cheshire and South Lee; talcose limestone in Williamstown and Becket; quartzose limestone in West Stockbridge; auguitic in New Marlborough and Tyringham; feldspathic in Tyringham; granitic limestone in South Lee; but the simple carbonate of lime is found in greatest abundance in Adams, New Ashford, Lanesborough, Pittsfield, (west part,) Lenox, (north part,) West Stockbridge, (which is famous of yore for its marble,) Great Barrington, Egremont and Sheffield. There are also quarries which were formerly worked to some extent, in Richmond, and although they have now lain unimproved for some years, yet the facilities which the western railroad offers for transportation, have, to some extent, aroused the lethargy of their owners, and the long neglected labors in them will, eventually, within a short period, be renewed. For most purposes, the marble of Berkshire is sawed into slabs after being taken from the quarry, an operation which tends greatly to diminish manual labor, and secure the greatest economy in the material worked up. But there are purposes for which it is employed, to which this kind of working off will not apply, such as columns, &c. In Adams, where the marble is very white, much of it is sawed and worked into "grave stones." There are also marble mills in all the other towns, where it is wrought to any extent. In West Stockbridge there are in the vicinity of a dozen such mills, where great quantities are annually wrought into shape for underpinning, steps, caps and sills, mantels, jambs and hearths, posts for fence, &c. &c. The beauty and excellency of West Stockbridge marble are now known and appreciated in almost every section of our country. Many of the finest structures in our cities exhibit it in their composition. Almost every church-yard through a wide spread region, shows its slabs of crystal whiteness, and unfading purity. Yet, even in their quarries a great variety of color and quality are to be found in blocks placed by nature in close proximity. While some, by their fineness and purity, would invite the labors of the statuary, others exhibit a coarse appearance, and present dull grey or iron colors. Among the finest of the marbles, are those found in the "old quarry," as it is termed, which is situated about midway of the town from north to south, on the west bank of Williams river, and near the line of the Housatonic railroad, by which its productions may he taken almost from their native locality to the Sound, and thence to any of the maritime markets at all seasons. The quantity of marble sent out from West Stockbridge, by the Hudson and Berkshire railroad, was about fifteen hundred tons. Though some of this was brought from other towns in the county, yet the probability is, that as much was marketed from this place, which was removed by other conveyances, as would be equivalent thereto, as that brought in would naturally come from the towns south, leaving Pittsfield and all north of it, to avail themselves of the western railroad and other modes of conveyance, as their convenience required. Consequently we think it safe to put down the quantity of marble sent by the cars from West Stockbridge in 1841, as about the amount quarried there; and taking the other towns in the county where it is wrought, it would be but a fair estimate, perhaps, to say that they produced a like amount. This would bring the aggregate to thirty hundred tons, an amount which must continue to increase in succeeding years, as the growth of our country and facilities to markets abroad increase.

The only locality in Lenox, where marble is wrought, is in the north part of the town, and a little distance west of the Housatonic. Though white is the prevailing color, yet we have seen beautiful specimens of a dove grey, which, when highly finished, forms an elegant article. The marble of Great Barrington is mostly grey or clouded. There is a quarry near the village from which the stone were taken for the Episcopal church and the "Berkshire House," which is elegant for this kind of structures, and will undoubtedly come into more general use as a building material. West of the village is a quarry of richly clouded marble, which, on polishing, exhibits a mirror-like surface. For compactness, it almost equals the Italian marble. The marble quarries in Sheffield are celebrated for affording material for the columns of Girard college in Philadelphia. The dip of the strata in these quarries is from 60° to 70°. The blocks for the columns have an average of six feet in diameter, and three feet in thickness. A visit to this quarry, when the labors of procuring these stones first commenced, would remind one of the days of the excavations of Petra, where dwellings were dug of solid rock. It was nothing unusual in Sheffield, to see laborers picking into the marble wall, a space just sufficient to admit their persons, and prosecute their labors; while above and around them, others would be performing the same services, and when they had penetrated the huge rock far enough, a ponderous mass was cleft by another process. The workmen received $150 per block for fitting these blocks for transportation. The price in Philadelphia was $500 per block.

Next in importance and quantity to the marble, is the iron ore of Berkshire; and it is, for the most part, found in proximity to the lime ledges, with which it appears to run nearly parallel. It is supposed by many, whose observation has been directed to the subject, that the iron mines in this county are a connecting link between the old and celebrated ones of Salisbury, in Connecticut, and Bennington, in Vermont. In the south part of the county, it has been discovered in Sheffield, near the base of Taghkanic mountain. The color and quantity of the ochre in which it is surrounded there, is unknown to us. In the west part of New Marlborough, it is found in yellow and light red ochres. In Barrington it has been found in the north-east, and west parts of the town. In West Stockbridge, it is found in large quantities a mile west of the village, where a mine was opened in 1827, which has been successfully

wrought ever since. This mine is situated in a tract considerably higher than the region that surrounds it, and is embedded in a brown ochre. The character of the hematite is found to change as the depth of the mine increases. Although that found near the surface is good, it is vastly better as the depth increases. About 1837, a substance of a light gray or clayey color was found intermingled with the ore, which, from a dislike to its appearance, was rejected by the furnace men, as a useless substance. A trial of its qualities was, however, tested, and it was found, that mixed with ores from other mines, it formed an iron of excellent quality, and was operated upon at a less expense than any of the neighboring ores. Since this discovery was made, it has been in great demand at all the furnaces, where it is designated as "the white horse" ore. We know not how it received this *unclassic* appellation, unless it was derived from the color. By the analysis of Professor Hitchcock, it is found to be the "carbonate of iron," and to contain of proto carbonate 87,19, carbonate of magnesia 5,21, carbonate of manganese 2,46, carbonate of lime 1,41, silicia, alumina, &c. 2,81, loss 00,92, in 100. The Professor represents this ore as resembling very closely the sphaerosiderite of Germany, and supposes that it may at once be wrought into steel, after the manner of manufacturing German steel. This mine was first opened on the west side of the hill in which it is located, and has now been excavated to the level of the land in the immediate vicinity, so that in order to prosecute the mining, it is found necessary to open a drain for seventy rods, to the level of a pond, and at an expense of $3,000. This drain has been commenced. In this mine, beautiful specimens of mammillary and stalactical iron ore have been found. The quantity now taken from it annually amounts to about 5000 tons. The old ore bed, so called, is in quite the north part of West Stockbridge and partly in Richmond. This, also, is in a rather elevated region, and in consequence of some difficulty in obtaining the mineral, it has not been wrought for many years. At a distance of about a fourth of a mile west of it, however, a new one was discovered a few years ago, by the small particles being brought out by a woodchuck, in opening his burrow. The formation in those parts led to the conclusion that these two bodies of ore are connected. This mine furnishes a rich mineral, and some of the best specimens of fibrous hematite to be found in the region. It is opened on the south side of a hill, and carbonate of lime is found on the north and east of it. The earth from which it is taken does not differ essentially from the common earth in those parts. Another bed of a similar character is found a mile north-east of this. Both of these mines are in Richmond, and the ore of both is profitably wrought into bar iron, the last giving 85 per cent. of peroxide. At the latter, the lime ledge is on the north and east. Half a mile north-east from the latter, on the east of a lime ledge, is another mine, known as the "old hill," the ore of which is imbedded in a slate colored ochre. Much of this ore was formerly carried to Dalton furnace and to Lee forge. Here the rare mineral Gibbsite was first discovered, an abundance of which still exists in the mine. Many specimens of it are really elegant, as it incrusts the ore in all the forms that fancy can desire. Sometimes it is found of pure and snowy whiteness, at others taking a tinge from the iron, or whatever substance through which the percolation may have passed.

At the east of this mine, and near the line of Stockbridge, at an elevation of some two hundred feet above it, and in a small valley formed by a spur projecting from Lenox mountain, a mine was opened some three years since, the quality of whose ore was at first thought to be of a superior character; but on trial it was found to contain so great a quantity of manganese as to render it unfit for all purposes, as an article of iron manufacture. The manganese was pronounced sufficiently pure to warrant its use as such; the farmer sold the right of digging for $3,000; the bubble burst over the heads of the speculators, and for the last two years it has lain in the same state of quietude which nature gave it. This mine is in a region of mica slate; the earth is of a yellow, ochery cast, but does not possess any very interesting features. At the north-west of this, and on a line with the mines before alluded to, is one surrounded with a nucleus of yellow ochre, of a very pure character. Here, the limestone is on the east, and mica slate north. Most of the ore taken from it is disintegrated, and of the kind termed wash ore. In this and similar beds, the veins are often broken by strata of the ochre which occurs in them of various thickness. Hence, the ore lies in what are termed by the miners pods, which contain various quantities, from 100 to 1000 tons. These circumstances baffle all calculation of cost in raising ore, as when a pod of it is struck, there is no assurance that the quantity is of much amount; and when the opposite stratum of ochre is reached, there is no assurance that the quantity of ore beyond will pay for penetrating it. Yet in most cases the thickness is not great, nor the labor of removal difficult, and the ore, when obtained, is generally of a rich quality, and easy to work.

Three or four other mines have been opened in Richmond, lying in the same direction of those already noticed; but these leave the limestone on the west, and have a mica slate formation east of them. Yellow ochre abounds more or less in all of them. In some, manganese, in beautiful crystalized forms, is found. Ore beds probably exist in other parts of the town, but the attention of the inhabitants has not been called to their exploration. In Lenox it also exists in considerable quantities. A mine in the west part of that town has had large draughts made upon it annually, for many years. Mines have also been open in and around the village, but at present are not much wrought. It is also found in Lee, in the vicinity of the limestone region, and in Stockbridge; but here it is so strongly sulphurated as to injure, if not wholly destroy, its excellency as a separate mineral.

But to return to the general strata or strike; it was formerly taken from lands now owned by the shakers, at a little distance east of their settlement in Hancock, and the general make of the county indicates its appearance the whole distance to Bennington; and we hope and believe that the day is near when enterprise will discover its hiding places, and bring its valuable treasures to light. There can be no doubt that the iron mines of Berkshire constitute an important portion of her wealth; they must, they will eventually, all be explored.

The magnetic oxide of iron has been found in a vein of quartz rock on Beartown mountain, south of Lee, but never wrought to much extent. Its quality has been tested, and proved to be good. The quantity of ore wrought and iron manufactured in this county, more properly come in the statistics, and will be noticed with them.

The stone for the furnace hearths in Berkshire, are quarried from a ledge in Washington, on the west base of the mountain, and about three miles from Pittsfield. The composition of the stone, is quartz, according to Professor Hitchcock, who considers it derived from gneiss, by the decomposition of feldspar. This stone is also used for burr stones, for which, however, it is inferior, and for flagging, being easily quarried and split into any shape.

Plumbago has been found in moderate quantities in New Marlborough and Hinsdale; Galena in West Stockbridge and Alford; but there is no assurance that either of the articles exist to any great extent, though the probability is in their favor.

Granular quartz, of a quality for glass making, is found in Cheshire, and has formerly been employed for that purpose, and from the abundance of it found there, and the excellence of Berkshire lime for glass making, we think its manufacture must be again, before a long time, resumed.

Mount Osceola, May, 1842.

NEW-YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF YOUNG MEN, FOR MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CULTURE.

THE transactions of the late Annual Meeting of the State Association, render it a special duty of the officers to urge the formation of Local Societies wherever none such are already existent—and to aid local Societies in forming Libraries and Cabinets of Minerals, arranging courses of Lectures, and promoting an interchange of Lecturers, &c., wherever desired.

In addition to the efforts privately made, in furtherance of this duty, it is deemed proper to give this notice publicly, that young men in any quarter of the state, who wish to establish Associations for Moral and Intellectual culture, may avail themselves (if they choose) of any assistance which can be rendered by the officers of the State Association.

When it is known that several of the most flourishing institutions in the state, originated in the effort of a very few individuals, it is hoped that none will be discouraged from making efforts in every town or village where a literary association has not been already formed.

It is proper to add, at the last meeting of the State Association a resolution was adopted, by which "the clergy of the state were requested to explain to their respective congregations, the objects and importance of Young Men's Associations for moral and intellectual improvement."

Associations which are not already united with the State Association, and which may desire to be thus united, (whether such Societies are styled Athenæums, Lyceums, Library Associations, Young Men's Associations, or otherwise,) are requested to notify either of the officers of the State Association, as soon as practicable.

Communications may be addressed (post free) to the following persons—Henry O'Rielly, President, at Rochester.—Arthur C. Southwick, of Albany, and Albert G. Zabriskie, of New-York, the Vice Presidents.—Edmund Dwight of Geneva, the Treasurer.—George R. Fairbanks of Watertown, the Recording Secretary, or to the undersigned at Schenectady.

May, 1842. JOHN Bt. CLUTE,
Cor. Sec. of S. A. Y. M.

[For the Northern Light.]

LABOR IN STATE PRISONS.*

BY J. LOUIS TELLKAMPF.

As an apology for offering a few remarks on the bill reported in the New-York Legislature by the committee on state prisons, a matter not regarded as a subject of party politics, the writer would observe, that he has taken of late years a deep interest in the alleviation of the miseries of public prisons, and has for that purpose examined all the best Penitentiaries of the United States.

Before considering the alterations, proposed by the bill, it may be perhaps of some interest to state what has been recently done in other countries on this subject. England and France, as is well known, have begun to introduce the Philadelphia system of separate confinement at labor; the former having originally adopted the Auburn system. Moved by the humane philosophy on which the Philadelphia system is based, the King of Prussia, among many other beneficial measures, has ordered a careful investigation of that system, with the view of improving the condition of the prisons in Prussia; and the Prince Royal Oscar, of Sweden, has recommended the same in his recent work "On Punishments and Prisons," laid before the Legislature of Sweden in the year 1840. The people in those countries entertain the same views; and every philanthropist considering those facts in America and Europe will rejoice at the progress of humanity since the time when such men as Beccaria, Howard, Romilly, etc. were ridiculed, as is the common fate of all who have been in advance of their age, and attempted to improve the condition of the human race. What a long and slow course through all history, humanity and civilization have made, until at last men advanced so far, as to be with true christian charity so mild towards criminals, and towards inhuman beings so humane as to attempt even in punishing, to improve them, and to reconcile them to God and the world. Truly those men who taught and carried out these principles were men of God-like nature.

In the mean time, while the superiority of the Philadelphia or "separate" system above all others in its moral benefits, is impartially and universally acknowledged in so many countries of Europe, the merits of the Auburn, or "silent" system are not overlooked; and it is admitted that both systems do honor to America, by showing that it has not forgotten, that the guilty man, although a criminal, and in prison, is a human being, susceptible of moral improvement. It is now for society as well as for the great number of convicts, a grave and interesting question in the rivalry between the Auburn and the Philadelphia systems, whether the alterations proposed by the committee on State Prisons will be improvements.

Some of the principal features of the Philadelphia system, viz: that each convict is entirely separated from the contaminating influence of his fellow prisoners, and that he is led by mild treatment to his duty, and to a moral reformation, and not by the whip, that application of the principle of fear,—the Auburn system from its very nature can never have; but it can be freed from some apparent objections, the most important of which are: 1st, the severity with which the prisoners are punished; and 2nd, the hiring them out to contractors. In regard to the 1st point, the convicts brought together in one penitentiary, are frequently too numerous, as for instance the number of convicts in Sing-Sing averaging eight hundred, together with the want of walls around the premises, requires this severity to keep the prisoners in subjection. This may be diminished if they are divided into smaller and more manageable numbers of about 3 or 400, as the above mentioned bill seems to intend by employing some of them in mining and smelting, at a distance from the present prisons. But it will be a matter of considerable difficulty to enforce silence in the mines, unless by a most expensive number of overseers, so effectually that their working together shall not have a seriously contaminating effect. Here we must remember, that the state has only a right

* This article, though written some time ago, relates to a subject of continued importance, and is, therefore, deemed worthy of publication.

"to punish,"—not to corrupt. It does corrupt, if it uses the system of joint labor in prisons without being abel to prevent communication among the prisoners: because men of a similar character coming in contact, impel one another in their career, so that not only the less criminal will be corrupted by the more criminal, but even the most criminal will gain in wickedness by the mutual contact. Society has a right to claim that the state may not corrupt, since it can demand to be protected against crime. The other mentioned defect of the present system is, that by hiring the convicts out to contractors, the latter use them only as money making tools, and therefore they must work so unceasingly from sun to sun, that the clergymen at several of the prisons, in different states of the Union, have complained to the writer, and justly too, as he is convinced by his own observations, that there was too little time for moral reformation, and too absorbing a desire of gain. It will be, therefore, an essential improvement to abolish the custom of hiring them out to contractors, provided that the hours for working shall be so limited, that some time for instruction and reform may be left free. And even looking at it in a pecuniary light, more money will be made or rather saved in this way, now lost to society by depredations upon it, by letting loose unreformed criminals. The convicts must have some leisure, that their moral instructors can have suitable opportunity to converse with them, to make them sensible that they have nothing in view but their good, that they may be induced to listen with patience, and be convinced of the sin and folly of perseverence in a course of crime that affords neither profit nor pleasure. But it seems doubtful whether the new modes of employment proposed in this bill can prove sufficient to support the discharged convicts; if this should not be the case, after their discharge, they will steal from necessity, which they will not so readily do, if they can honestly maintain themselves by their own labor at a trade independently of employers, who commonly hesitate to use convicts, even for merely common and bodily labor.

The proposed abolishment of instruction in the trades does not appear, therefore, to be an improvement, and it seems worthy of consideration, whether it might not be sufficient to abolish the system of contractors, and to sell the manufactured goods of the convicts at a fair competition in the market from which the goods of no part of the world are excluded. This method has been of late years pursued in the Eastern Penitentiary of Philadelphia, to the advantage of the convicts, and as it seems, not to the disadvantage of the mechanics. By such a measure, the monopoly held by contractors which here interferes with fair competition by mechanics, would cease; and as little as society in general can regard itself disgraced if reformed and discharged criminals assist in useful production, just so little can the mechanics complain if here and there a former convict sustains himself by honest mechanical occupation, for his former character, even if known, does not affect the mechanics of better standing, as is shown by the instance of a former convict of the Eastern Penitentiary of Philadelphia, who is now a respectable physician in Pennsylvania, and the other physicians and his neighbors, who became aware of his former imprisonment, do not regard themselves disgraced by him, but rather esteem him more highly for his present good conduct.

If contractors do not enjoy the monopoly of the cheap good and uninterrupted labor of convicts, and if the prison-produce is sold at a fair competition in the market, no complaint can be made: for the convicts, had they been free, would have been obliged to labor, some perhaps, in manufactories or trades, to obtain a subsistence. Because they did not labor, but gained their living by criminal means, they have been imprisoned, and since they now labor, a portion of society complains; this would be an evident absurdity if their employment by contractors had not injured fair competition. If the latter is not the case, the Penitentiaries stand like manufactories, which, if the convicts are not as now overworked, cannot undersell mechanics, since every business carried on by the state, costs more than private. The Penitentiaries exchange the value of a part of the surplus of their labor for the raw material of the surrounding country, and give their profit to the state instead of giving it to the employer of a factory. No one complains of an employer and his factory laborers, but every one calls them useful producers increasing the wealth of the country. *Union College*, 1842.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS, FROM 31ST MAY, TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1841.

DOMESTIC.

May 31. Congress met at Washington, under the proclamation issued by President Harrison. The House of Representatives organized by the election of John White, of Kentucky, as speaker, and Matthew St. Clair Clarke as clerk. The message of President Tyler was communicated to both houses on the following day.

June 4. Mr. Clay introduced into the Senate a bill to repeal the sub-treasury bill, as it is usually denominated.

June 10. Richard Harrison, late one of the auditors of the treasury, died at Washington.

June 16. The steam packet Columbia arrived at Boston, from Liverpool, by way of Halifax, in 12 days and 8 hours, the shortest passage on record.

June 20. James King, Chancellor of the University of the State of New-York, died at Albany.

June 22. Samuel S. Lush, formerly a member of the Legislature, died at Albany.

June — Willis Gaylord Clark, a gentleman distinguished for his literary taste and acquirements, died at Philadelphia.

June 25. Major General Alexander Macomb, the Commander in Chief of the army, died at Washington. General Macomb entered the army as a cornet of Dragoons in 1799, rose by regular gradations to the rank of Brigadier General, and received the brevet rank of Major General in 1814, for gallant conduct in the defence of Plattsburg, N. Y.

June 26. The remains of Gen. Harrison were removed from Washington to his farm at North Bend, Ohio.

July 1. Governor Robert R. Reid, of Florida, died at Tallahassee.

July 12. Isaac Lawrence, a highly respectable merchant, and formerly president of the branch of the bank of the United States in the city of New-York, died in that city.

July 12. The Supreme Court of the state of New-York denied the application for the discharge of Alexander McLeod, and directed him to be remanded for trial in the ordinary forms of law.

July 12. Major General Winfield Scott appointed to the command of the army, as the successor of General Macomb.

July 13. A great fire took place at Waterford N. Y. and about one-half of the taxable property of the village was consumed.

A number of bank robberies occurred during this month. These villainies were generally perpetrated by the officers of the banks, some of whom had been for years engaged in secret abstractions of the funds of the institutions with which they were connected. Among the principal of these cases was the robbery of the State Bank of Illinois, by H. D. Town, one of the tellers, who, to cover up his frauds, destroyed the books of the bank.

August 3. A destructive fire at Oswego, N. Y.

August 4. John Breckenridge, a distinguished divine, died in Kentucky.

August 5. Fire at New Orleans—loss $100,000.

August 6. The Fiscal Bank bill passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 128 to 91. The bill passed the Senate on the 28th July, by a vote of 26 to 23.

August 9. The independent or sub-treasury bill was repealed by a vote of 134 to 87, in the House of Representatives. It passed the Senate on the 9th June, by a vote of 29 to 18.

August 16. President Tyler communicated to Congress a message withholding his assent from the Fiscal Bank bill. The principal ground of objection to the bill, was that it asserted "for Congress a right to incorporate a United States bank, with power and right to establish offices of discount and deposite in the several states of the Union, with or without their consent;" a principle to which the President stated that he had always been opposed, and which could never obtain his sanction.

August 18. The bill to establish a uniform system of bankruptcy throughout the United States, passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 110 to 106. It passed the Senate the 25th July, by a vote of 26 to 23.

August 20. A fire accompanied with a terrific explosion of gun-powder, occurred at Syracuse. Twenty-five persons were killed, and fifty wounded. There were twenty-five kegs containing 650 pounds of gunpower, in the burning building.

August 21. Gideon Lee, formerly Mayor of New-York, died at his residence near Geneva, N. Y., where he had retired about two years before.

August 23. The bill for the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands among the states and territories, passed the Senate by a vote of 28 to 22. It passed the House on the 6th inst. by a vote of 116 to 108.

August 29. John A. Graham, LL. D. died in New-York.

September 1. Joseph Nourse, formerly Register of the Treasury, died at Washington.

Sept. 3. A second Fiscal Bank bill under the title of a bill to provide for the collection and safe-keeping and distribution of the public revenue by means of a fiscal corporation, passed the Senate by a vote of 27 to 22 It passed the House on the 23d of August by a vote of 125 to 94. On the 9th, President Tyler returned the bill with his objections. Some of the principal objections were as follows: 1 that it justified substantially a system of discounts of the most objectionable character, by the right conferred on it of dealing in its bills of exchange, drawn in one state and payable in another without restraint; 2. That it prescribed no limit to the premium in the purchase of bills of exchange, and that a resumption of specie payment by the state banks would be liable to be indefinitely postponed under the operation of an institution, which the President denominated "a national monopoly of brokerage."

Sept. 4. A riot broke out at Cincinnati, in consequence of a quarrel between the whites and the blacks, and continued for a part of two days. During its continuance several lives were lost, and a number of persons were wounded. At one time, a cannon in the hands of the whites was directed against a building occupied by the blacks, armed and in force, and had been once discharged when by the arrival the of military, probably a great destruction of life was prevented.

Sept. 5. Martin Chittenden, formerly Governor of Vermont, died.

Sept. 5. Greenville Mellen, well known for his poetic talent, died in the city of New-York.

Sept. 12. General Robert Bogardus, a highly respectable member of the bar and Colonel in the army during the war of 1812, died in the city of New-York.

Sept. 12. The members of Mr. Tyler's cabinet with the exception of Mr. Webster, resigned, and new ones were appointed in their place. The new appointments were Walter Forward, Secretary of the Treasury, John C. Spencer, Secretary of War, U. P. Upshur, Secretary of the Navy; C. A. Wickliffe, Postmaster General, and Hugh S. Legare, Attorney-General.

Sept. 13. Congress adjourned after a session of 106 days. It passed twenty-five laws and five joint resolutions. Among the most important laws were the act authorizing a loan of twelve millions of dollars, the act providing for a home squadron, an act to repeal the Independent Treasury bill, an act to establish a uniform system of bankruptcy throughout the United States, an act to appropriate the proceeds of the sales of public lands [by distribution to the states and territories,] and to grant pre-emption rights, and an act relating to duties and drawbacks.

Sept. 18. A horrible murder was committed in the city of New-York by John C. Colt, on Mr. Samuel Adams, a highly respectable printer. His body was cut up, packed in a box in salt, and put on board a vessel bound to New-Orleans. By a train of accidental circumstances, this deed of blood was disclosed before the vessel sailed, and the body found. The murder was committed in Colt's room, where Adams had gone to see him to procure the settlement of an account for printing.

Sept. 19. Col. James W. Grogan, a citizen of Vermont, was seized at Alburgh, near the border line, by British soldiers and carried into Canada. On a representation of the facts, he was immediately liberated by the British authorities and the act disavowed. An officer concerned in the transaction was tried and dismissed.

Sept. 21. John Murphy, formerly Governor of Alabama, died.

Sept 25. The Herkimer County Bank was robbed of $72,000, by the book-keeper and two other young men. They were immedately pursued and captured with the money in their hands.

October 4. A great storm in Massachusetts, accompanied with violent wind and snow. The snow fell in some places to the depth of a foot.

Oct. 5. A collision occurred between two trains on the rail-road between Boston and Albany at Russell, in Mass. Some twenty persons were killed and wounded, and the engines were totally destroyed. One of the passenger cars was shivered to atoms and all the rest more or less injured.

Oct. 12. Alexander McLeod was acquitted at Utica. The impartiality and dignity of the judge, the admirable arrangements of the sheriff for preserving order, and the universal decorum on the part of the spectators during a trial, which was the source of great public excitement, were the subjects of general admiration and comment on both sides of the Atlantic.

Oct. 18. A great fire in Georgetown, S. C., by which a large portion of the business part of the city, was destroyed.

Oct. 22. John Forsyth, who had been for a long course of years distinguished as a public man, and who had filled a great variety of official stations—from that of member of Congress, to those of Governor of Georgia, Minister to Spain, and Secretary of State, died at Washington.

November. A remarkable succession of destructive fires occurred in the course of this month, indicating not only great carlessness in the use of the destructive element, but great deficiencies in the means of extinguishing them. Among them was one at Vicksburg, Miss. one at Charlestown, Mass., one at Claremont, N. H, one at Petersburgh, Va., two at Providence, R. I., one at Wiscasset, Me., and several others in the United States and Canada.

Nov. 16. Charles F. Mitchell, late a member of Congress, found guilty of forgery We have on a former occasion referred to this case as one among many in which persons of high standing have been involved, and which grew out of the unfortunate and reckless spirit of speculation of 1835 and 1836.

Nov 22. A boat with three men went over Niagara Falls. The mangled remains of one of the bodies and the fragments of the boat were found the next day in the river below.

Nov. 26. David Wood, a highly respectable merchant of Albany, and President of the Canal Bank, died.

December 6. Congress met, and the President's message was sent in the following day.

Dec. 14. Nicholas Biddle and his associates were presented by the Grand Jury of Philadelphia, for defrauding the stockholders of the Bank of the U. S.

Dec. 16. A violent north-east storm in Massachusetts. Numerous vessels along the New England coast were wrecked.

Dec. 19. The first locomotive came through from Boston to Albany.

In closing this brief summary of events, it is proper to state that a large number of frauds and defalcations have been omitted. Most of these have been connected with the management of money corporations, and many of them have been of long standing. Individuals who have borne the fairest characters, have been found engaged for years in abstracting the funds of the institutions with which they were connected, to carry on their speculations. That the moral character of the country has suffered severely, and that the moral sense itself has been, in some degree, blunted by these numerous profligacies, cannot be doubted. When shall a better state of things prevail? When honest industry is looked to as the only legitimate fountain of wealth and profit; when fraud, defalcations, and the dishonest management of property in trust, shall be ranked among the highest social offences; and when the wealth or high standing of individuals concerned in them shall have no power to screen them from the most opprobrious punishment.

FOREIGN.

June 1. Sir David Wilkie, so well known for his paintings of familiar life, died.

June 4. Sir Robert Peel's resolution that Her Majesty's Ministers (the Melbourne ministry) do not possess the confidence of Parliament, passed the House of Commons by a vote of 312 to 311, *one* majority.

June 15. The Island of Terceira, one of the Azores, was visited by a succession of earthquakes, and the town of Praia destroyed.

June 21. Father Matthew administered the temperance pledge to 12,000 persons at Bainbridge.

June 22. The British Parliament was prorogued by the Queen, and on the following day it was dissolved by proclamation, and a new election ordered. The new election, which took place immediately, resulted in the complete overthrow of the Melbourne ministry, and in a tory majority of 78 in the House of Commons.

June 25. A terrible fire occurred at Smyrna. Twenty thousand inhabitants were completely ruined by the destruction of their property.

June 29. The Queen of Hanover died.

July 5. Seventy lives were lost in launching a barge at Rotherham, near Sheffield, in England.

July 13. The Convention between Austria, France, Great Britain, Russia, Prussia and Turkey, in relation to the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, was signed at London, thus terminating the pre-existing difficulty between France and the other great European powers. The object of the convention was to render general the arrangement made between Great Britain and Turkey in 1809, by which the Sultan agreed to close the straits against ships of war of all nations, so long as Turkey is at peace.

August 19. The British Parliament met.

Aug. 24. The measures of the British ministry were censured by a majority of 72 in the House of Lords, and on the 20th a similar vote was passed by a majority of 91.

Aug. 30. Lord Melbourne and his associates resigned. A new ministry, with Sir Robert Peel at its head, was immediately appointed.

Aug. 31. Mr. Wells, the American banker, died at Paris.

Aug. 31. The island of Amoy, between the island of Formosa and the eastern coast of China, was captured by the British.

September — Lord Sydenham, the Governor General of Canada, died at Toronto.

October 7. The British Parliament was prorogued by commission.

Oct. 29. A terrible massacre of the Christians by the Druses, took place at Beyrout. The Christians rallied and organized, and an exterminating warfare was carried on by the parties. A hundred villages were sacked, and an appalling loss of human life was sustained on both sides.

The kingdom of Naples suffered severely during this month by storms and earthquakes. The district of Casoria, near the city of Naples, and Calabria, were ravaged by these unwelcome but not unfrequent visiters.

November 1. The tower of London burnt. The loss of the grand store-house of armory, embracing as it did memorials of every period in the history of England, from the earliest times, cannot be repaired. The crown jewels, which were of great value, were saved.

Nov. — Daniel O'Connell was elected Mayor of Dublin.

Nov. 9. The Queen of England gave birth to a son, who is heir apparent to the British throne.

Nov. — Sir Francis Chantrey, the great sculptor, died.

Nov. 17. A serious inundation occurred at Venice, from a sirocco of several days' duration.

Nov. — An enormous fraud in the issue of Exchequer bills by Beaumont Smith, senior clerk in the office in London, was discovered. It was supposed that the fraudulent issues exceeded a million and a half of dollars.

Nov. 20. A tremendous fire took place at St. Johns, New Brunswick. The new market, Mayor's office, several banks and twenty-one vessels burnt. The loss of property exceeded $1,000,000.

December. During this month the series of operations and movements were going on in the province of Cabul, between the British forces and the Affghans, which led to the evacuation of the capital city of the same name early in January, and the entire destruction of the British army by the latter, in violation of the terms of the convention, under which the evacuation was made. This was one of the most serious reverses the British power had sustained in the East for years. The loss of life (about 12,000 persons, including followers of the army) was of less importance, so far as her future relations to her colonial possessions in Asia are concerned, than the example of such a triumph by the subjugated nations of that quarter of the Globe. The Affghans will, of course, be severely chastised, and the British arm will be again extended over eastern Affghanistan.

Literary Notices.

SERMONS AND SKETCHES OF SERMONS, by the Rev. John Summerfield. *Harper & Brothers, New-York.* The deep sensation which was created by the impassioned eloquence of this powerful preacher, is fresh in the remembrance of a large portion of the community. The volume before us is, for the most part, but a collection of sketches, or outlines of the fervid discourses, which he poured forth during his short visit to America, with a profusion which was truly astonishing, and which, no doubt, contributed to cut short his brief, but brilliant career. In general, these outlines are drawn with great skill in respect to the management and logical connection of the arguments. The student of divinity cannot fail to derive benefit, as the general reader will interest and instruction, from a careful perusal of the book.

THE LIFE OF WILBUR FISK, D. D., by Joseph Holdrich. *Harper & Brothers, New-York.* This is a very interesting biography of a very able and excellent man—a man distinguished not only for great genius, but for a fund of sound, practical sense, which whenever secular matters became in any manner complicated with the affairs of the Church he was connected with, almost always enabled him to hit, as it were instinctively, upon the right course of conduct. Dr. Fisk had been for several years before his death, President of the Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Connecticut, and after his return from Europe, in 1836, on a tour in pursuit of health, he published a very interesting account of his travels, which is well known to the reading public. His biographer has given a modest, and as appears to us, no more than a just delineation of his moral and intellectual qualities, with an interesting sketch of his useful life.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE, OR THE WILL AND THE WAY, by the author of "Wealth and Worth," &c. *Harper & Brothers, New-York.* An admirable little story, told in the same captivating style as a former one, by the same author. The principal characters are sketched with spirit, and the moral tendency of the book is excellent. The author will render the public a valuable service, by continuing his labors in the same field of literature—a field, he may be assured, in which there are still laurels to be gleaned by him, though it has already been reapt by the inimitable hand of Miss Sedgwick.

HISTORY OF THE EXPEDITION UNDER THE COMMAND OF CAPTAINS LEWIS AND CLARKE. *Harper & Brothers, New-York.* The publishers have rendered the public a valuable service by republishing the Journal of this expedition. As our readers know, it was made in the years 1804, 1805, and 1806, under the authority of the general government, and resulted in laying before the country a vast amount of information relative to the extensive region previously unexplored between the Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean. The account of the expedition being nearly out of print, it has been republished, with the omission of some unimportant details, and the addition of extracts from the journals of later travellers.

NARRATIVE OF AN EXPEDITION TO THE POLAR SEA, by Lieut. (now Admiral) Wrangell, of the Russian Imperial Navy. *Harper & Brothers,* New-York—Vol. 148 of the Family Library. The expedition, of which this volume gives an account, was executed in the years 1820, 1821, 1822 and 1823, by direction of the Russian Emperor, Alexander. It is in the highest degree interesting, not only from its descriptions of a portion of northern Siberia, and its inhabitants, but also from the light which it sheds upon that portion of the polar sea which lies between the Asiatic continent and the new Siberian islands. These explorations, like those on the American side, between the continent and the Parry islands, are important as connected with the great object—the discovery of a north-west passage—an object not yet deemed altogether hopeless.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ACADEMIC LITERATURE, by Charles H. Lyon. *H. & S. Raynor,* New-York. This volume is a collection of essays, dialogues, &c., having for one of its objects to furnish students in academies with a greater variety, than they possess in the ordinary class books, of matter for exercise in practical elocution. Many of them are on subjects of national interest, and partake strongly of the spirit of our free institutions. Mr. Lyon's name is familiar to our readers, as a contributor to the Northern Light. His style is neat and chaste, and his compositions commend themselves to favor by the correct tone of thought which runs through them.

THE DAUGHTERS OF ENGLAND, by Mrs. Ellis. *D. Appleton, & Co.,* New-York. Those who have read the Women of England, by this agreeable writer, will find this volume, which is a continuation of a series yet incomplete, quite as attractive as the other. Both these works are designed, in their designation of the duties and responsibilities of women, for the middle classes in Great Britain, and they are applicable to all classes here, as we have, fortunately for us, neither the privileged nor the degraded orders which are characteristic of the artificial condition of society in that kingdom. We shall look with interest for the two remaining volumes—the Wives and Mothers of England.

APPENDIX TO KINNE'S LAW COMPENDIUM, No. 1. *John S. Voorhees,* New-York. The work to which this is an Appendix, we have not seen, and can only speak of it on the authority of others. It consists of questions and answers on law, arranged alphabetically, in 2 vols., comprising together, thirteen hundred and fifty pages. The plan and execution of the work have been approved by some of the highest legal authorities in the U. S., among whom, are Mr. Justice Story of the Supreme Court of the U. S., the attorney generals of Mass. and Penn., the chief justices of Vermont and New-Jersey, and other distinguished jurists. The Appendix before us, contains one hundred and twelve pages of valuable legal matter, with copious references; and we do not doubt that the main work is, in all respects, worthy of the general approbation which it has received.

UNCLE SAM ON PHRENOLOGY. *Harper & Brothers,* New-York. Uncle Sam, as might be expected from his well known eccentricities, discusses his subject with no small degree of quaintness of style. This remark, however, is more particularly applicable to the introductory letters, though the peculiarity runs through the whole book. In these preliminary chapters the author approaches his subject with a wariness, which, if it had been carried a very little further, might have suggested to us the propriety of inserting an *e* between the *w* and *a*, as a more accurate expression of its impression upon the reader. But as the author advances, he infuses fresh interest into his book, which may be briefly characterized as a treatise on phrenology, in a popular form, rendered more attractive by the introduction of the narrative method of illustration.

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